

WEDNESDAY 3RD SEPTEMBER 2008

The Speaker, Sir Peter Kenilorea took the Chair at 9.35 am.

Prayers.

ATTENDANCE

At prayers, all were present with the exception of the Ministers for Mines and Minerals and Rural Electrification, Minister for Health and Medical Services, Women, Youths and Children's Affairs, Police, National Security and Correctional Services, Agriculture and Livestock, Development Planning and Aid Coordination and the Members for Central Makira, East Makira, South New Georgia/Rendova/Tetepare, West Honiara, West Guadalcanal, North Guadalcanal, Central Honiara, South Choiseul, West Are Are and Aoke/Langa Langa.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND OF REPORTS

By the Chairman of the Parliamentary House Committee

"The National Parliament of Solomon Islands Corporate Plan 2008 – 2012" (*National Parliament Paper No. 22 of 2008*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Revenue Collection

25. Mr **SOGAVARE** to the Minister of Finance and Treasury: With regards to revenue collection, can the Minister inform Parliament on the following:-

- (a) Total actual revenue collection by Inland Revenue to date?
- (b) Total actual collections by Customs & Excise to date?
- (c) Total actual collections from non-tax revenue to date?
- (d) How are the actual collections in (a) to (c) compare with the expected estimates for the period?

Hon. RINI: Mr Speaker, I would like to thank the Leader of Opposition and MP for East Choiseul for the question. The answers are as follows: -

- (a) Total actual revenue collected by Inland Revenue to date, that is end of July 2008 is \$374.89 million.

- (b) The actual revenue collection by Customs and Excise today that is also end of July 2008 is \$216.8 million
- (c) The total actual collection by other ministries to date is \$67.7 million and
- (d) Compared with the expected estimates for the period, Inland Revenue actual collection is \$28.5 million above pro-rata or an increase of 7%. For Customs and Excise, the actual collection is \$13.9 below pro-rata or a shortfall of 6%. For the other Ministries the actual collection is \$10.1 million below pro-rata or a 12.9% shortfall. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr Sogavare: Just a supplementary question on the collection by Customs and Excise, Mr Speaker. How much does log exports represent in the collections by the Customs and Excise? What percentage represents collection of export duties from log by Customs and Excise?

Hon. Rini: Mr Speaker, I do not have the percentage figure but the actual to date on the export of log is \$118.7 million, compared with the budget of \$97 million. It is an increase of \$21.6 million.

Mr Sogavare: Mr Speaker, I thank the Minister for answering that question.

Installation of emails and telephones in provincial substations

31. **Mr SOGAVARE** to the Minister for Communication & Aviation: What preparation will the Ministry be undertaking or has undertaken in 2008 or 2009 to achieve its policy objective of installing telephones and emails in provincial substations and strategic locations in each constituency?

Hon. LONAMEI: Mr Speaker, I want to thank the Opposition Leader and MP for East Choiseul for asking this question. Mr Speaker, to install telephones, emails or mobiles in the provinces is the responsibility of service providers, like Telekom or any other service providers. In our case, Mr Speaker, we have only one provider, which is Our Telekom making it to become a monopoly.

The current government's policy is that it wants to open up the telecommunication market to competition so that any other service providers can come in to provide services to Solomon Islands. Unfortunately, Mr Speaker, because of the monopoly license that Telekom has other service providers cannot come in and operate. But there are other service providers like Digicel and others that are interested to come in.

What my Ministry is doing at the moment is that we have set up a Task Force to negotiate with our Telekom on how we can end this monopoly license. We have already identified a consultant to head the Task Force to negotiate with Telekom to see how we can end the monopoly license.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, my Ministry will appoint a consultant to review the present Telecommunications Act to see if there is need for the Act to be amended or not. That

Task Force is going to do that. Those are the two things the Ministry is doing at present in preparation of opening up the telecommunication market for more providers to come in and invest in it.

Mr Sogavare: Mr Speaker, just a supplementary question. What is the current status of the negotiations? Where are we at this time? On the review of the Act, are we seeing the Ministry bringing in an amendment in the next sitting of Parliament?

Hon. Lonamei: Negotiations is currently underway at this time and this Task Force will report back to me on its findings and the results of its negotiations and once that is done I will take that to Cabinet. All these are ongoing at this time.

Mr Sogavare: Mr Speaker, the second part of the question has not been answered. The review of the Act, are we expecting amendments to be brought to Parliament in the next sitting?

Hon. Lonamei: Mr Speaker, in regards to the review of the Act, it is also currently underway. We are going to appoint two consultants to come so that work progresses well. We are hoping to bring an amendment to the Act in the November Budget Sitting but if there are any delays then hopefully it will be brought in next year.

Mr Sogavare: Mr Speaker, I thank the Minister for explaining the position of the Government on that particular policy and with your indulgence.

Cattle Rehabilitation Program

33. **Mr SOGAVARE** to the Minister for Agriculture & Livestock Development who unfortunately, sir, is not in the House at present and so I will direct the question to the government anyway: What is the progress of the implementation of the country's \$10 million Cattle Rehabilitation Program which was funded under the 2007 Development Budget?

Hon. MAGGA: Mr Speaker, I only took up the reign of Acting Minister of Agriculture just this morning, and so this is the answer I was given.

First of all, Mr Speaker, the question was referring to the 2007 Development Budget which allocated SBD\$9.7 million for the Cattle Rehabilitation Program, and not \$10 million as stated in the question. Since the question was referring to the 2007 Development Budget, the Leader himself seeking this information would be in a better position to answer the question himself. That is the answer I was given.

Mr Sogavare: Mr Speaker, this is the attitude that we do not want. We have a problem in here in that we are personalizing government as though it belongs to our fathers or your fathers. We need to rule a line between the entity called the SIG and the ruling

government. This is an ongoing government program, Mr Speaker, and you are now in custody of the system. What we are asking you now is to just basically brief Parliament on the progress of the implementation of that program because it is ongoing, Mr Speaker. For us to come up with excuses like that does not go down well, Mr Speaker. It is not acceptable and in fact it is uncalled for, for a government that represents itself as a responsible government. Let us be responsible leaders, Mr Speaker.

I do not know whether the government wants to respond to the question, Mr Speaker, but it is obvious here that it will not answer this question. And I will reluctantly thank him but it will go down in the records that this is the most irresponsible government that is in power now and throwing bucks back to previous governments. If you want government you take over, Mr Speaker.

Hon Lilo: Mr Speaker, point of order.

Hon Sogavare: Mr Speaker, you tell this Minister to sit down.

Hon. Lilo: Point of order. No, can you ask the Leader to sit down?

Mr Sogavare: Tell him to sit down, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker: He is raising a point of order.

Hon. Lilo: I am raising a point of order.

Mr Sogavare: Well, I am telling you to sit down.

Hon. Lilo: Mr Speaker, can you ask the Leader to sit down?

Mr Sogavare: Well, I am telling you to sit down!

Hon. Lilo: No, you sit down.

Mr Sogavare: You sit down.

Mr Speaker: He raised a point of order and we respect that.

Hon. Lilo: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I think the Leader has now respected that I have raised a point of order. The point of order I am raising is in respect of a term that he used that "this government is the most irresponsible government".

Mr Sogavare: It is!

Hon. Lilo: It is not!

Mr. Waipora: It is!

Hon. Lilo: I mean, how could you say that statement?

Mr Sogavare: It is very, very, irresponsible mate!

Hon. Lilo: We are responsibly standing up to answer a question to him and the Minister has just given a response in saying that...

Hon. Sogavare: He is passing the buck!

Hon Lilo: ... \$9.7 million of this particular project has been expended. That is the progress so far; expenditure of \$9.7 million. I am expecting him to ask a question on what comprises that \$9.7 million then it would make sense. The Minister has already said that \$9.7 million has been expended on that particular project. He should have stood up and asked what of that \$9.7 million has been spent on that project? Or what have we achieved out of that \$9.7 million? Instead he stood up and blown himself up, already showing that there is something burning in his heart that has really disturbed him right up until today.

Mr Speaker: I will not allow debate on this matter.

Hon. Lilo: Absolutely! Absolutely! I am not asking a question. I am just raising a point of order, Mr Speaker. Thank you.

Mr Sogavare: Mr Speaker, can you ask that narrow minded individual to sit down? It is the way he answered the question saying: "It is the Opposition Leader that should know" is what I am responding to, Mr Speaker. The question is very clear and that is, what is the progress on the implementation of that particular program and he should have given me a logical answer instead of answering it that way.

I do not want to pursue this question further, Mr Speaker. The government has shown that it is very, very irresponsible and I withdraw this question, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker: You may continue with Question No. 55.

SDA and Anglican Churches Proposal to Build Universities

55. **Mr SOGAVARE** to the Minister for Education and Human Resources Development: What is the latest CNURA Government's position on the request by the Seventh-Day Adventist Church and the Anglican Church on their proposals to establish two Universities in Solomon Islands, in partnership with the Solomon Islands

Government after considering the concerns raised by the Prime Minister during the February sitting of Parliament?

Hon. TAUSINGA: Mr Speaker, I wish to also thank the Honorable Leader of the Opposition and Member of Parliament for East Choiseul for the question.

The question is in two parts, Mr Speaker. The first part is in relation to the government's position to the Seventh-Day Adventist Church to establish a university in Solomon Islands and second part is in respect of the Anglican Church's request to establish a university in Solomon Islands, in partnership with the government.

In respect of the Seventh Day Adventist Church, all I can say here, Mr Speaker, is that the Seventh Day Adventist Church is yet to resubmit its proposal. In respect of the Church of Melanesia, the Church Authority, Mr Speaker, has resubmitted a revised and detailed proposal for the Ministry's and Cabinet's consideration. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr Sogavare: Mr Speaker, I thank the Minister for explaining the government's position on those two very important projects. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

MOTIONS

Motion of adjournment *sine die*

Mr Speaker: Honorable Members, according to the adjournment of this debate yesterday, the debate on the motion of adjournment *sine die* continues and concludes today. As some Members have not yet contributed, once again I call on all Members to allow their colleagues sufficient opportunity to speak to the motion.

Hon. LILO: Thank you, Mr Speaker, and I thank the Member for West Makira and the Minister for Infrastructure for giving the Minister for Environment and Member for Gizo/Kolombangara the opportunity to contribute to this motion.

Mr Speaker, I also join the Prime Minister in recommending that Parliament must *sine die* today. I say this not because we have been sitting for the last six, seven weeks but I think it has been a very successful meeting and so we must *sine die* today, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, it has been a very, very interesting meeting. In fact, according to Chinese custom this meeting meets the eight-eight. It is an Eighth meeting of the Eighth Parliament, which is a very successful number, Mr Speaker. But not so successful for the motion of no confidence that was moved on the 8th of August 2008 because it has no. 8 on it; the 8th of August, which is also 8 in 2008. But overall, I have assessed that this has been a very, very successful meeting and we should conclude today, again, commending ourselves for a very, very successful meeting of this Parliament.

In saying that, Mr Speaker, I should also wish to join others who have spoken including the honorable Prime Minister, in thanking government authorities and

institutions that ought to be commended for what they have contributed, making this meeting a very successful one. This includes the Government House, His Excellency, in particular for recommending to this House that the Duke of Gloucester addresses this House. Mr Speaker, the message that His Royal Highness, the Duke of Gloucester has left with us is this: "we need to cooperate and we need to work together to succeed." That is the message he left with us.

Also, Mr Speaker, I must thank your good self and also the Deputy Speaker for the excellent stewardship of this meeting. In fact, in your absence, the Deputy Speaker has done very well in steering this Meeting, and you ought to be congratulated too the MP for North East Choiseul for excellent presiding of this meeting.

Mr Speaker, when I last spoke in the motion of sine die in February, I said that there were no questions and answers. But during this meeting we had 66 questions all from the Leader and his Deputy Leader, the Member for West Makira. We should commend both of them for asking these 66 questions. They continued to incite this House of what we ought to know about developments facing this country, the progress on certain policy actions that government is pursuing and so forth, Mr Speaker, and so they ought to be commended.

But the Opposition, as you know, the Opposition is a group but why is it that only two men are singing. I hope they do not lose their voice because only two people singing out of the eight, asking questions and so forth. I think we better do something in the next meeting so that we expect more from other Members of the Opposition raising questions, and not only the two of them. But overall, they ought to be commended, the Leader of Opposition and his deputy.

Sir, quite rightly the Paper this morning, commended the Leader of Opposition for issues that he raised yesterday about attendance in this House. But I think he raised that concern at a time when he spoke. When the Prime Minister spoke all the Members were present. It was only when he spoke that the House was empty because the same things he said will be repeated again, and that is why I think the House was empty. Who would want to remain in the House to hear the old same things being repeated, so that the House is full? But he definitely has the point this morning and he scored a good point, the media gave him 2 out of 0, although I would give him 1 out of 0 minus the fact that the issues he raised are not new things but just the same issues he always raised before.

Questions and answers have improved since we last met and have continued to incite this meeting. It has been featured as something that is a tradition of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, the Prime Minister also mentioned that five bills have been passed in this House, and out of that, two new amendments and three new bills. I would like to talk on one of the bills, the Secured Transactions Bill 2008. This is a bill that will truly help development in the rural areas of Solomon Islands. In fact, it is part of the whole effort in trying to bring rural financing right down to the rural people of Solomon Islands. It is part of the four-legged approach in delivering rural financing; the first leg of it being the extension of the banking system to the rural areas. We know that when that project was put out, the ANZ Bank was given the task to deliver that particular

project to very strategic locations in the country that have the potential of advancing development out there in the rural areas. It has provided ATM solar powered banking system and also mobile banking to the rural areas. It has also collaborated very well with the Solomon Islands Postal Corporation, Mr Speaker, in providing postal services in banking or EFTOS to rural postal services in Solomon Islands. That is the first leg of this particular policy, Mr Speaker.

The second leg is the guarantee scheme, which is a scheme that is aimed at salvaging borrowers if in the event they default in their credit with the Banks. This facility will provide the support to cushion them out of the liability they have in the financial institutions, and it has been working very well; it has been working very well.

The third leg of this particular approach, Mr Speaker, is the equity supplementation scheme. That is where financial institutions would normally require equity from potential borrowers. Considerations will be given to proposals that have positive outlook to be given the supplementation in their equity support, Mr Speaker.

I must thank the Minister of Planning that we have been able to have donors supporting that particular scheme. In fact the European Union and the World Bank and others who have participated in the Rural Development Program have come in to chip in their support into this Rural Equity Supplementation Scheme. All of these, Mr Speaker, are aimed at enabling our people in the rural areas to be able to gain access to more credit within our financial system.

The fourth leg of this particular strategy in providing rural financing to our people in the rural areas is the Secured Transactions Bill. This Secured Transactions Bill will provide additional support to people's proposals. It is for our financial systems to be able to accept proposals that will come out from our people, our rural people in particular that do not have the usual kind of collateral that banks would normally call, because of the kind of system we have and therefore they have been disadvantaged, Mr Speaker. But this new Act now that it will come into operation will provide that additional support for our people to be able to use movable assets that are normally not recognized now but this time they would be able to use them in order to provide or to get the kind of credit they want from our financial systems.

I would recommend, Mr Speaker, that the Minister of Finance should quickly put in place the necessary arrangements so that we can put this facility into use, so that more of our people in the rural areas can have it and gain to the finance that they now do not have, Mr Speaker.

Also, Mr Speaker, in this Meeting we have been able to see for the first time we have put the review of RAMSI under the purview of the Foreign Relations Committee, which is the right body to do it. That was the right body to undertake and carry out the review of RAMSI. And I must thank the Prime Minister for his foresight in putting this arrangement that we have been able to have the Foreign Relations Committee to carry out the review of RAMSI in that manner. So far it has been generating very good interest, Mr Speaker, from the public. The work of that Committee is continuing and as we have seen, our pigeonholes are filled with yellow envelopes from the Committee. We must ensure that we provide answers to the questionnaires so that we ourselves as

Members of Parliament must take on the responsibility to generate the interest of our people to get involved in carrying out the review of RAMSI.

It is the right move. Unlike how we used to undertake the review outside of Parliament and there were arguments over mixed feelings and disagreements on RAMSI and then when we bring it back to the House and we say that due to other commitments we are unable to carry out the review.

Mr Speaker, that is a sad situation because when we do that we are spoiling the future of what we can build out of RAMSI. But for the first time now we are bringing back the review under the purview of Parliament to have the appropriate body here in Parliament to carry out the review of RAMSI. I think that is a right move. It is a right move and the government ought to be congratulated. We have to congratulate the Prime Minister for the wisdom in doing that and also the CNURA Government, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, we understand that also at this Meeting we have discussed private members' motion and one of those motions is the motion of no confidence. Mr Speaker, it was one of the first motions of no confidence that was flatly defeated in this House on the 8th of August 2008. It was 39 versus 8 votes. And the message in that result, Mr Speaker, is that this country out of the prayers of our people they want political stability from now until 2010. That is what is going to happen, Mr Speaker. The CNURA Government will go on until 2010 and it is a very good political outcome that we have been able to achieve for this country.

I say this, Mr Speaker, because in a normal situation we assess ourselves given our leadership responsibilities, especially considering ourselves and weighing issues like motions of no confidence, we should at least make an understanding that out of our own judgment we should make good decisions and weighing all the issues and circumstances to decide whether or not it is right for us to move a motion of no confidence. But instead against all the odds and usual attitude that has been demonstrated by the leadership of the Opposition group, the result and answer came out on the 8th of August; 39 versus 8 votes.

But the main message that has come out of that is that people of this country have been praying for political stability and they have got that answer on the 8th of August. They have a stable government that will run from now until 2010. And with that, Mr Speaker I must thank the CNURA Government and its present leadership, the Prime Minister of Solomon Islands that we will continue to rule until 2010 because it is the right thing and it the right product that the people of this country expect and they will have it.

It has been a very, very good meeting and as I have said, I will have to go and start preparing for my trip tomorrow and so I will speaker very briefly. I will be leaving for one of the most important meetings of this region, and that is the 12th Meeting of the South Pacific Regional Environment Program, deciding on the future SPREP. So I will not speak much.

But, Mr Speaker, regarding the sector that I have been given the responsibility to look after, I do not want to come and boast to the House how good we have been or how

positive the development has been but let me just say that three weeks ago we have launched one of the biggest conservation program in Solomon Islands. It is the declaration of about 30 Marine Protected Areas, within the New Georgia Group of Islands, the Roviana-Lavata area, and I think it is one of the most significant conservation developments this country has ever had.

Sir, this happens at the right time because talking about the strategy of promoting tourism development in this country, it has to come together with some kind of development that is linked very well in the promotion of tourism. This particular conservation program will blend very well with the promotion of tourism in that part of our beautiful country of Solomon Islands.

Conservation-tourism development well integrated with strong community support. This came from communities, and it is not always easy to get support from the people, but fortunately we have been able to have communities coming so willingly and voluntarily to give their support in declaring these 30 sites within the Roviana-Lavata, starting from the Roviana Lagoon right through to Vonavona, covering two constituencies, the constituencies of South New Georgia, Rendova-Tetepare and West New Georgia. I must congratulate the two MPs of both constituencies for their support in helping the community come up with this conservation program.

Next year we are expecting to declare parts of New Georgia and also parts of Marovo, Mr Speaker. In fact we have already put in as part of our plan that the next launching of our major conservation in this country will be in Seghe, in the Marovo Constituency. This is all part of this conservation, tourism community integrated development approach in promoting sustainable conservation development and tourism development in Solomon Islands, Mr Speaker.

I want to congratulate the communities that have made the decision to undertake this program and in particular the Ministry of Fisheries and the Ministry of Environment and their technical officers who have worked so hard in getting people in these particular communities to accept this development that will take time to realise and see its benefits. But here they are, they have all come out and made their decisions.

At the same time, Mr Speaker, I should wish to thank the Chairman and members of the Environment Advisory Committee who have also under the leadership of the Member for Temotu Nende, who is the Chairman of the Committee, although I have told him to meet three times but the meetings were delayed because he went to his constituency and spent some time there, which delayed the implementation of the programs, and eventually the meetings were held, for agreeing to our recommendation to support this conservation development.

These are some developments that are going on right now. Right now we are working towards declaring a conservation area at Savo, for instance, at the megapode breeding sites. The Member for Savo is not here, but that is one very good thing that we will be working towards. We are also currently working on finalising the arrangement of selecting trustees and coming up with the enactment of a new body to look after the declaration of East Rennell under the World Heritage.

Mr Speaker, we have been talking about this for years and yet nothing has been done. We must start doing it today, including the Leader of Opposition who has always been talking about some of these things, but I have not heard him talking about World Heritage, may be because he does not know anything about conservation. But here we are doing these things to introduce some new tastes to our development potential in Solomon Islands, Mr Speaker.

Conservation and sustainable development is a new concept and it is not an attractive one, Mr Speaker, because it takes time for people to reap its real benefits. But there are communities that are now starting to come out and see the benefits of conservation development with social development and good improvement in community development within our communities. So we must encourage them, Mr Speaker.

These are some of the new things that have come out of my Ministry within my sector and I am very pleased that some of these activities are picking up and are now showing good results to our people and showing positive results for our country to move on in terms of development.

We must understand that the growth of this country has been largely driven by just a single commodity and if that commodity drops we will be greatly affected. That is why recently the government has to take the decision to improve the pricing of this particular commodity. We are receiving, as what the Minister for Finance has said earlier, against the budgeted estimates, a good improvement from this new determined pricing system of our log exports, Mr Speaker. That is quite opposite to what the Leader of Opposition was saying that we should not increase the determined price.

Looking at the overall receipt there is an increase of about 6% to 7%. It has been increasing and it will continue to increase. But the main thing we are showing here is that this government is picking the little bits and pieces that have not been put together in terms of the potential development issues that we should be advancing and putting them in the right perspective. Putting them in the right perspective for us to incorporate in our development strategy and move forward with it.

This meeting has come up with a lot of potentials. It has come up with a lot of positive message for our people. I must say that we can all conclude this meeting on a positive note, looking forward to a good future, Mr Speaker.

With that Mr Speaker, I would like to again thank the people of Gizo-Kolombangara for continuing to have trust and confidence in me as their elected representative. I want to assure them that I will continue to advance their interest in this House, and also the interest of the CNURA Government in leading this country. Mr Speaker, I will continue to support this government and to move forward.

Mr Speaker, we as leaders of this country must continue to build hopes for our people, and yesterday we have been listening to all the good potentials that have been coming from, for instance, the Minerals sector and other sectors that this country can look forward to into the future. We must come up with new strategies that will bring good hope and benefit for our people.

In speaking about good hope and benefit and the future for this country, Mr Speaker, it is on us as leaders to work towards. But when I say that, I am reminded of one of the two veterans or pioneer leaders of this country when they jokingly said one day that: "It is us leaders that had to take the responsibility of leading this country. We are the hope of this country." This is from the former Member for Shortlands and Member for West Makira. And the Member for Shortlands turned around and said to the late Member for West Makira that: "We are the hope of this country. But when you look at the people of this country our people do not have much hope in them." He was saying that: "Look at the United States, you have people like Ronald Reagan, Bob Hope and Johnny Cash. But in the Solomons we only have you Member for West Makira, no hope, no cash." You know this is the kind that we should not be, Mr Speaker. We must have trust in each other as leaders and bring more hope to this country.

I do hope that in this meeting with all the interactions that we have been having in this House, will bring good hope for this country. With that, Mr Speaker, I support this motion.

Mr. KENGAVA: Thank you Mr Speaker for giving me the opportunity to contribute to the motion of sine die moved by the Honourable Prime Minister earlier this week. I wish to thank the Prime Minister for moving this traditional motion giving opportunity to Members of Parliament to express their appreciation, concern and suggestions on a wide range of issues that were already dealt with in this meeting or may be were not dealt with at all, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, my observation can be rated as success to the people and the Government of Solomon Islands. If the government failed to pass the Supplementary Budget 2008, or was voted out in the motion of no confidence, then definitely I would say that this meeting is not a success for the government, Mr Speaker.

Sir, our performances, in my simple view, can be looked at in this way. The government has done remarkably well in such a short period of time in office. Out of the limitations of a national budget passed very late in April 2008, yet the country is still progressing and moving in the direction following the policies and programs of the CNURA Government Mr Speaker.

The Prime Minister's presentation of the government's work plan in the coming months is an assurance that the CNURA Government is taking control of its policies and programs. The passage of five Bills, the answering of about 66 questions, defeating of a motion of no confidence and the supporting of an Opposition MPs private motion really shows a government that knows when to give and when to take, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, I think equally important the Opposition Group is also performing very well as the alternative government. Although they are few in numbers the group is effective and very active in asking and researching questions. I think this allows the nation to know or be updated of the government's work programs and their progress, Mr Speaker. So it is a credit to both sides of the House.

Sir, I think the ordinary man and woman out there in the villages will understand better what is going on in this country through the presentation of

statements by Ministers and through asking of questions by Members of Parliament. In my understanding, our discussion of bills and various reports presented in this House has enabled the ordinary man down in the rural areas to really follow what we are saying. I think it is good that we keep on encouraging more statements from the government and more questions from Members of Parliament in the coming meetings.

Sir, I would like to move on to comment on the three bills passed in this House during this meeting, with the intention of pointing out certain areas that need to be further addressed by the government or the government should take note of when implementing these bills.

Firstly, the Secured Transactions Bill is a good bill that focuses on improving the financial and economic sector of our country. This bill is very much, in my view, for individual business operators and entrepreneurs of this country. But to address the needs of the communities and tribal groups in the rural sector, Mr Speaker, I would even suggest further that may be in the next meeting or in any meetings still to come that the proposed amendment to the Cooperatives Act be forwarded to this Parliament. May be there is also the need to look at amending the Credit Union Act so that it is much easier down there in the rural areas, Mr Speaker.

We all know, Mr Speaker, that customary land is owned by nearly 90 percent of our people, and it is owned tribally, community or communally owned, not by individuals, Mr Speaker. I always believe in setting up cooperatives because it is inline with this tribal ownership of land, especially when we want to involve people in the rural areas to use their customary land to venture into commercial activities like agriculture or fishing activities, Mr Speaker. It is when we want to encourage individualistic or capitalistic attitude that is causing disputes in the rural areas because land is never owned individually by our people. I think these two Acts need to be reviewed and brought to Parliament so that things will go in line with the encouragement we are giving to private sectors, individuals on this Secured Transactions Bill passed lately in this Parliament.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, the passing of the Supplementary Appropriation Bill 2008 will allow the government to continue its services and development programs. This is a must and I am pleased that this bill was passed. My only comment is briefly on the CNURA Government's additional \$5 million RCDF. Mr Speaker, I think this is a blessing in disguise.

Sir, we are concerned of becoming too dependent on aid money and donors and the move by the CNURA Government to me is a reflection of what governments today and tomorrow should be doing in the future, Mr Speaker. If the economy is growing and finances are right then the RCDF should be fully funded by the Solomon Islands Government so that we can relieve the Republic of China, Taiwan, which is currently funding the RCDF. By doing this, Mr Speaker, the Republic of China could concentrate more on funding the Millennium Development Fund, the ROC Micro-fund, and the need for free education in this country.

Lastly, I want to briefly touch on the Truth and Reconciliation Bill which gives us the legal mechanism to commit Parliament, Government and all people of this country

to put to rest, probably and hopefully, the causes and results of the ethnic tension. Sir although it may fall short of some of our expectations, it is a starting point which can be further improved, and we congratulate ourselves in passing this particular bill.

At this point I would like to encourage the government that despite of its focus on the ethnic tension, let us not forget the other issues still clouding over this nation, and that is state reconciliation and compensation. I want to remind us of the outstanding demands by the people of Western and Choiseul Provinces, to be reconciled and compensated for the causes of the Bougainville Crisis spill-over effects, Mr Speaker.

I am sure the Ministry of Reconciliation is now embarking on a program, for which I want to encourage it to go right down to the areas affected so that we can update the concerns of our people. I want the government to look at this more seriously because it was under the 'hot pursuit' action by the Papua New Guinea Defence Force when there were three cross-border shootings at three villages in North West Choiseul Constituency, namely at Loemuni, Subesube and Moli, Mr Speaker. People in those areas will never forget. The point I would like to put across is that we must not allow any outstanding issues or concerns by our people still hanging over this country. I am happy that this particular bill may be should pave the way to move into those areas as well in the future.

Sir, I will look at certain issues which I want to raise in the light of the preparation of the 2009 National Budget, which I am sure will be tabled in this Parliament this November. While raising these issues, Mr Speaker, I hope to point out certain points which I hope if it is within the government's policy and programs, they could be taken on board.

First, Mr Speaker, in the education sector, and I wish to focus on two issues. I think there is need for all provinces to accommodate one national secondary school. National secondary schools have the advantage of building unity, peace and progress for Solomon Islands, because they are boarding schools. I was in one of the boarding schools run by the churches prior to independence and even after independence which brought students from different provinces, communities and cultures together. It is in these boarding schools that understanding, tolerance and nationalism can be grown Mr Speaker. Most of us or all of us here in this House probably were the graduates of those church boarding schools. Whilst it is good to have and expand the community high schools for the sake of giving equal opportunity to education, I see the community high schools as having one disadvantage; it does not bring students from other provinces and communities to better understand each other.

Mr Speaker, therefore it is very important that we look closely at encouraging national secondary schools in each province so that we have cross-provincial boarding in various schools who can better understand each other. I think this is one of the reasons why today in Solomon Islands we seem to appear as strangers to each other on the streets of Honiara, Mr Speaker. This is my observation. We tend to only know people from our own provinces, people from our communities and people may be within our own areas and wantoks only.

We are now having more and more community high school less and less national secondary boarding schools. We must turn this situation around like in the past when the churches encourage all of us to mix together in boarding schools so that we know each other. That is how we can understand that we are all from Solomon Islands.

The need to build at least one national secondary school for each province is a very important point, and probably a way forward in rebuilding this nation from the ethnic tension that we have experienced in the last few years. If the idea is accepted, Mr Speaker, the following provinces are yet to accommodate a national secondary school. They are namely Choiseul Province, Isabel Province, Central Province, Temotu Province, and Renbell Province. This is a big task for us to look at so that we encourage more unity, more nationalism and more understanding in this country for the next 30 years.

Sir, the second issue I want to raise on the education sector is for Solomon Islands to have its own national university. This is a chronic need yet to be solved. Why, Mr Speaker? In my simple observation and assessment, Mr Speaker, our problem is we become too bogged down, we become tied up with regional institutions like the University of the South Pacific. We believe or were made to believe that being part of the regional university will solve our educational need. But today, Mr Speaker, we can say that it does not. If we took heed of the suggestion made by a professor by the name of Professor Crocombe, if I may use that, Mr Speaker, in the late 1980s saying that Solomon Islands should have its own university, probably today we would not be facing the problems we are facing in the country in regards to training of our students for tertiary education.

Mr Speaker, I therefore wish to suggest the following ideas for consideration. First, I think, it is very important that a bill should be brought into this Parliament on the establishment of universities in Solomon Islands. This will, of course, accommodate the interest of private sectors like the Seventh Day Adventist church and the Church of Melanesia, who are now wanting to establish their own universities in this country, Mr Speaker. There should be guidelines in establishing universities here through an enactment so that it is for today, tomorrow and onwards. Right now we do not have that particular act and that is why we have problems in not quickly supporting the SDA Church and the Church of Melanesia to get the universities established as their wish.

The second bill which I think should be brought to this House is one that should either amend or replace the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education Act, so that the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education be formerly declared as the university of technology in Solomon Islands, Mr Speaker.

Sir, let us allow the USP to establish a fourth campus, but in my view the fourth campus be taken over by the Solomon Islands Government at a later period through a proper agreement to become the national university of Solomon Islands.

What I am saying here, Mr Speaker, is let the fourth campus be developed to become the academic university of this country and SICHE to be developed to become the technological university of this country.

Sir, if the fourth campus is in that line, and that is one day it becomes the National University of Solomon Islands and then the School of Education at the upper

Panatina Campus can be incorporated into the fourth campus. What I am trying to say here, Mr Speaker, is that I think it is time we stop beating around the bush by allowing advisers from abroad and from within to pull our noses around, yet not providing a university that we can call it is the Solomon Islands university. Sir, we must face this head on if we want to improve education in this country.

Mr Speaker, an area I would like to touch on in terms of development, which I hope in our preparation of the 2009 budget, the stakeholders should take note of, is the need for road infrastructures on all main islands of this country, Mr Speaker. The Choiseul Province badly needs roads as well as the Isabel Province. The island of Vela La Vella badly needs roads.

I can tell you, Mr Speaker, that Choiseul is a sleeping economic resource for Solomon Islands. You put roads there and you will see us develop and contribute more to the economic development of this nation. Even right now, in the logging industry, Choiseul is the third largest revenue earner for this country through logging. We only need roads, Mr Speaker. With our closeness to Bougainville, the autonomous province of Papua New Guinea, it is very easy to trade there and bring in the much needed foreign reserves into the country.

Sir, I know that there is a transport policy in place but my concern here and problem is finding the money, the finances to finance our plans for roads and airfields in the country. At present, Mr Speaker, we depend so much on assistance from financial institutions such as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank and also our traditional aid donors. The only problem with depending on these traditional financial assistances is that we cannot follow our own time frame, but we have to follow, probably the donors time frame, and of course, no question about the political interest of the donor, Mr Speaker.

Sir, with this in mind, I want to suggest that we must break from this sickness and learn from the wisdom of the late Mamaloni, if I can mention that, Mr Speaker, when his government loaned money from the Kuwait Fund to construct the four lane roads we are now enjoying in Honiara.

What I am saying is that we must specifically search for money to build infrastructure such as roads and airfields from financial institutions overseas, reputable ones that have no political strings attached so that the government can take control and follow its own time frame in providing such services for our people.

Lastly, Mr Speaker, I want to draw us to the importance of producing rice in this country, which was already raised by the Minister and also raised in Parliament. The \$25million passed in the supplementary budget for rice production is very promising for Solomon Islands. However, in my view, learning from various funding available in the past, from forestry, from fisheries from small businesses, etc, if we are not careful we might lose 50 or 60 percent of that funding to nowhere and may be only 40 will bear some fruits, Mr Speaker. Because the implementation plan of the \$25million mentioned tends to be spread all over the country. That is, those who apply will be given the funding. I think this means we are going to spray out or throw out money and resources throughout the country. This is my fear.

I would like to suggest, Mr Speaker, that the government focuses more on where it is more suitable to grow rice so that the \$25million will be properly invested and produce results. With that in mind, Mr Speaker, the government should search around and find which province is more suitable and capable to commercially produce rice in years to come in partnership with the province, the landowners and our good friends, the Republic of China to venture into large scale commercial rice farming that will feed Solomon Islands, and even export to neighboring countries.

Mr Speaker, in my assessment as a simple man looking at the situation, only Guadalcanal Province has the potential to become the rice producer for Solomon Islands and even the Pacific. This is something the government must seriously look into. We can still allow smallholder rice schemes but let funding for that come from other sources.

Lastly, Mr Speaker, I wish to touch briefly on the need for us to pay closer attention on the need to improve the highest institution of this country, which is the National Parliament of Solomon Islands. Today before us we have the Corporate Plan of the National Parliament and it must be in our interest to look closely at the need and ways to improve this Parliament. We are all part of the institution but many times we tend to forget to give the supremacy this Parliament needs by way of legislation, finance, manpower and facility. This Parliament needs to be truly independent from the executive government, in my view, so that the Speaker has the power to call for meeting. This will truly show that Parliament as another arm of the three arms of the Government is the supreme body, the custodian of the Constitution, Mr Speaker.

Sir, I think with the passage of the meeting calendar recently, this is an opportunity and possibility to change the regulation so that the Speaker calls for the meeting of Parliament following the meeting calendar. This will allow Parliament the independence and the supremacy and should not be tied down with the executive government, Mr Speaker.

Sir, secondly this Parliament needs to complete its phases of development infrastructure. There is the need for more office complex, recreational centres, accommodation for Members of Parliament, etc, etc. This is very important. This has now been going on for may be 10 years but we are only seeing one building on this spot, Mr Speaker. It is time to see 3 or 4 more buildings as we want to expand the performance of Parliament we need more office space, not only for Members of Parliament but also the staff and those working in this Honorable Parliament. Meetings rooms, in my view, are getting smaller. There is need for bigger conference rooms and lecture theatres within this compound, Mr Speaker.

Sir, thirdly, this Parliament needs better funding to run its services. It should not be tied very much to the decision of the Ministry of Finance on whether there is money or not. I think somewhere should be looked at so that Parliament has its budget it is independent from the authority of the Ministry of Finance.

Sir, fourthly, the Parliament needs more manpower to properly serve our needs and welfare and also the work of legislation in this Parliament. Sir, lastly, I think this Parliament, may be not very important to us, but I would like to say that the Parliament's compound needs to be fenced, Mr Speaker, and roads leading up to the

House be reviewed so that probably it should come straight from Foxwood Street up to the eastern entrance. These are major issues still waiting to be done to get this Parliament to some standard so that it is improved as time goes on. I therefore suggest that the House Committee and the Government work together to look into ways to make our Parliament more accommodating and more supremacy in Solomon Islands.

In conclusion, Mr Speaker, I wish to thank your good self and other colleagues in this Chamber for bearing with me to talk a bit longer than expected. Sir, wearing two hats as the Deputy Speaker in presiding over sittings and also as a Member of Parliament, sometime it is very tempting to debate on certain issues from the throne. Sir, I therefore use this motion as an opportunity to contribute as a representative of the people of North West Choiseul.

Sir, I also want to thank the people of my constituency for their prayers and support given to me in this Parliament. To the people affected by the tsunami from Solowai to Sangigae, you shall expect shelter materials arriving at your villages later this month and we will continue until December 2008. We are working very closely with Save the Children Fund to make the rehabilitation work more effective and efficient, Mr Speaker.

Finally, I wish to thank you for your confidence in me to preside over some sittings and also the cooperation from parliamentary member colleagues in this Chamber. I thank the parliamentary staff in whatever task you took to make the meetings a success, especially the Clerk, the Parliamentary Secretariat, the security and support staff. Sir, with the above statements I support the motion.

Mr. VAHOE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Firstly, I would like to contribute to this customary motion moved by the Honorable Prime Minister.

Mr Speaker, I am going to be very brief in my contribution. At the outset I would like to thank the Honorable Prime Minister and the government for the able leadership in governing the affairs of our nation. Also, Mr Speaker, my vote of thanks also goes to the Leader and Members of the Opposition for their sound and constructive debate in this recent Parliament Meeting. Mr Speaker, furthermore, I would like to extend my thanks to all the Honorable Members who have participated for their sound and constructive debate in this recent Parliament Meeting. All in all, in the passing of bills and a private member's motion.

Mr Speaker, I would like to thank your good self, the Clerk, and the staff of National Parliament for their efficient and effective conducting of the proceedings of this Parliament Meeting, and also to mention the auxiliary staff for their hospitality.

Mr Speaker, since our nation attained statehood 30 years ago, our country has faced so many challenges. I would like to thank past and present leaders for their vision, hard work, commitment and tireless efforts for bringing our nation this far.

Mr Speaker, I would recommend that the National Parliament makes legislation in recognition of our great leaders for their dedication, loyalty, honesty in governing the affairs of our nation.

Mr Speaker, our nation is rich with natural land and sea resources. Mr Speaker, I guess successive government requires downstream processing of our resources. In this context, our rural people of the day ...?... assistant to enable us to assist them to fully utilize their resources to earn income and improve their standard of living.

Mr Speaker, on the same view we must not neglect our human resources for they are our country's future investment. The government of the day must prioritize training programs to train them to acquire the necessary technical skills and knowledge. Our human resources are our future products that will continue towards our social and political development foundations.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to convey my people's acknowledgement of the CNURA Government for a sound and very effective rural advancement policy. I therefore urge the CNURA Government to continue deliver the projects in the line ministries for our rural people as soon as practicable. We have merely three months left to deliver.

Sir, people in my constituency are listening to the radio everyday when Parliament convenes its meeting. On behalf of my good people of the Malaita Outer Islands Constituency, I would like to acknowledge the CNURA Government, in particular my good Minister for Infrastructure and Development for the assurance informing Parliament of government assistance to subsidize shipping services to remote and uneconomical routes of Solomon Islands. Mr. Speaker, as the honorable Member representing the small lying coral atolls of Solomon Islands, today I stand in this Chamber with clouds of uncertainty hanging over my head. Our once beautiful islands where our people and children used to enjoy its surrounding environment, the local food and the beaches, will in three years time disappear and submerge under the ocean. Mr. Speaker, the experiences of soil erosion caused by high rising sea are erratic and our children's future is in total darkness. Mr. Speaker, I do not know who will be a good Samaritan brother and friend to salvage and lend a hand to the cries of our children and their future caused by this climate change?

Mr. Speaker, I would like to appeal to the good Minister for Environment, Conservation and Meteorology to expedite his program of monitoring and evaluation in conjunction with other line ministries to visit the vulnerable islands, in particular my constituency to make assessment reports to the government and aid donors for possible funding assistance.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is enough of talking. A large population of our people, in particular the unemployed youths, the rural people in our communities are in need of an action government that delivers development projects to enable them participate in income generating activities, and above all enhance a better standard of living.

Mr. Speaker, before I conclude my speech, I would like to urge all leaders to respect each other as we are responsible leaders of our nation. We should have one common goal to work together build our nation for our children's children future prosperity that stands forever more.

Mr. Speaker, lastly but not the least I would like to convey my words of hope to all the good loving citizens of our nation, in particular the inmates at Rove and all the

provincial centres, the sick and the handicapped patients in the Referral Hospital and the various clinics in our provinces. To our young national heroes, the talented football players, I wish them success in their world cup performance in Brazil. To the families and unemployed youths of our country, God bless you all. With these few remarks, Mr. Speaker, I support the motion.

Mr. WAIPORA: Mr. Speaker, thank you for giving me this opportunity to contribute to this motion of sine die moved by the honorable Prime Minister.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that this Meeting has been the longest meeting and some of the days were just a waste of time. But it is good that the Leader of Opposition and myself have a lot of questions to ask making Parliament busy. We are very proud of our participation in asking those questions, which enables our people to better understand what the government is doing. The only disappointment is that some of the Ministers did not properly answer the questions asked to them. This shows to me they are not doing their work.

I am from the Opposition and so I studied your policy from the beginning to the end. This makes me wonder whether the Ministers read the policies at all. I do not know. But I studied your policy from the first page to the last page. That is why I can ask you questions. I am checking you because I am doing my job as the opposition member so that I know what I am talking about. You might be wasting your time for not seeing your policy.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, having said that, I want to say that I think we have a cancer in Solomon Islands and that is why I agree with the CNURA Government that we must tackle the reconciliation process. But I am sad to say that you are not going to tackle it because the mixed feeling is with you and the people. I do not know if you are going to achieve reconciliation, peace and unity, which I think is going to happen.

I warn the government that from now on until 2010 you must work hard to achieve reconciliation because without reconciliation we will not achieve our projects and the things that we talked about.

We must also review the political structure we are in now, Mr. Speaker. If it is difficult to reconcile, look at your political structure. What is the short cut to reconciliation so that there is peace and unity in the country? I know that is why the CNURA Government has appointed a Prime Minister from Guadalcanal and a Deputy Prime Minister from Malaita so that at the end they must fix their own peoples. You must start from now until May 2010 to achieve reconciliation otherwise there will not be any progress.

We have a cancer in this country, and that is we must address the Guadalcanal lands. You must tackle the Guadalcanal land issues first because during the ethnic tension I was used as a scapegoat to fix this problem. In 1998 I was the first one to tackle this problem, and so I am happy that my honorable Minister for Fisheries and myself were the ones having headache over that issue during that time, and it is not easy.

I am telling you now that you must make sure this problem - the Prime Minister from Guadalcanal must today address this problem before the whole country will be

okay. Mr. Speaker, I am serious because I know that this is the only way we can achieve peace. We from Makira do not fight; we are very mild people and so we can come between you and make unity and peace.

Mr. Speaker, that is why even though a lot of good things were said about your government, uplifting the government, your regime and your administration, this is still a cancer on us. We must do it before any problems come up.

I am surprised that most of the projects like the university, why do you want to put them only on Guadalcanal and not the provinces? The Deputy Speaker just talked about our schools. Please, we must spread them out so that we do not attract everybody to come here to attend schools here Guadalcanal.

Makira has two secondary schools already, so upgrade one of them to university status, may be Waimapuru. You must work on this.

Mr. Speaker, you laughed at us during the motion of no confidence that we lost by eight. I tell you that in Noah's time, not 39 people but only eight were saved in the Ark. It is not 40 or 39 but only 8 that were saved in the Ark.

Mr. Speaker, in the political structure if you want my help you must come to me. I think we should reduce the ministries, do away with the Provincial Governments and establish constituency governing councils. That is my belief today. My Minister for Public Service and I worked on that but it was cut short. We do not need a three tier government, but it should be from the central government direct to our constituencies. I urge you to work on this. I can help if you need my help.

Mr. Speaker, you must work together. As from now onwards, 80 percent of your time, Ministers must be spent in your offices. But when I called up your offices there were no Ministers in the offices. You cannot point fingers at me because I was a minister twice during Ulufa'alu and Sogavare's time and I remained faithful to both of them.

Mr Speaker, I challenge all of you to work because you said that you can do the work and so go on ahead. I will be watching you from now until May 2010 when I will come back and speak in here again.

One big problem we are now facing is the rising cost of fuel. This nation is a nation of islands. When you talk about unity and peace, transportation is very important so that people move from place to place. When we say transport, we are talking about ships. Do not think I bought a ship for West Makira and that is why I am talking about ships. No, I am talking about the fact that we need ships.

Yesterday I struggled with people from West and East Are Are until they sailed away, and that is why I did not attend Monday's sitting. We must look at the problem of fuel as it is a very big problem to our ship operators today. It is very important that the government addresses this very quickly to see how we can go about it.

Mr Speaker, if you run a ship for twenty-four hours, as far as my ship is concerned it uses 106 litres of fuel per 24 hours. When you multiply that by five days you are to steam the ship to Makira, it will never be below \$80,000-00. Do not laugh at the fuel, but make sure you solve it because it is not only for ships but it is also for vehicles, and you are the ones using government vehicles. This is a big problem.

I am sorry that some Ministers are not here. Why? I am not happy with this meeting because the chamber is always empty. I do not want to talk to the posts, the chairs and the desks. No, I want to talk to you as my brothers - the Members. You should be sitting down on your chairs when I talk so that you hear what I am saying.

Sir, my humble request is that you must work hard and try to look at what ways we can make changes and what ways we can achieve unity and peace. At this time, I can tell you honestly that there are mixed feelings by our people because it seems you are not addressing it properly and some are not happy with you. I must be honest.

Today, we stand up here and talk about RAMSI, and we are proud of RAMSI. Our people have mixed feelings about RAMSI today. Some people have ill feelings against RAMSI.

Hon Fono (*interjecting*): Those are criminals.

Mr Waipora: They are not criminals but the educated ones who know what is going on. It is not those outside who do not know what is going on. But it is people with degrees, the educated ones have mixed feelings about RAMSI.

Some of them instead of coming here to improve our lives are provoking us, sometimes. Their presence here is provoking. Why did they prevent our people from working in the ministries? Do they not know about accounting yet? They bring in the Australian system which some of us do not know. I only know and understand the British system of accounting and budgeting. I am brought up with the British system, but may be those of you who went to school after me know the system but not me.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you. I do not want to take long because I must give time to some of my friends. But I must repeat again as I did in the last meeting that I am very happy to see you sitting with us in here today, because it is you who started this country for us, you and my late brother Solomon Mamaloni. I am happy that even though he is gone you, Mr Speaker, are still with us. I still regard you as my father in this Parliament. I see that you are always patient with us even though the chairs are empty. I thank you and the Clerk for working very hard to administer our daily businesses and other parliamentary staff as well. I would like to thank all of you.

I also thank public officers working in the ministries, and I hope they will keep up their good work. I hope they will be in time, all the time, and maintaining punctuality in their various offices. When I was minister I always raised the issue of punctuality. As Minister I was always the first person to be in the office before all the public servants come into the office.

Mr Speaker, I also want to thank my voters or people in my constituency. They are very happy to see the position of their leader. They see that their leader is a man of principle and conviction, and not a person who jumps here and there. They are very happy with him because they know that their Member of Parliament, their Leader is firm and is a man of principle. He does not jump here and there. Supposing that has been what I did; jumping here and there, you will not see me here again in the next

election. But now I am standing firm to my conviction and you will see that I will be talking in here again in 2010.

Mr Speaker, although I am talking like this I still want you, I respect you that you will continue to carry out the programs of the government for the benefit of our people. Do not think about yourself too much, especially in regards to projects under your programs, because despite the fact you may implement a good number of projects, if you do not do it right you can still lose your seat. So you must work hard as we only have about just less than 21 months to go to implement the projects.

Thank you for accepting our motion of no confidence. I have known well before hand that it would be defeated but I wanted us to must move it. It is very good to check you up through that motion. It is good and everything works together for good to them who are loving. That is why even though you are against us on that motion and even though how much you do not agree with us, at least, we have thrown the ball and the ball is in your name.

We thank you that even though you did not support the motion, I believe that you will believe what we are doing on this side of the House. We will always be here to make sure that you carry out your work, not for our constituencies alone but for the welfare and the betterment of this country. That is what you say "reconciliation, peace and unity for rural advancement". That rural advancement cannot come about if the cancer is not healed.

Mr Speaker, with those few remarks, thank you very much.

Hon. SOFU: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for recognizing me to also contribute on this very important motion, the motion of *sine die*.

Mr Speaker, I also wish to thank the honorable Prime Minister for moving this very important motion on Monday 1st of September 2008 so that Members of Parliament from both sides of this House have the freedom to express what they want to say in this honorable House. Mr Speaker, I wish to also thank my colleague Ministers, the Opposition Leader and Members of Parliament who have also contributed to this motion.

Sir, I would like to thank your good self and the Deputy Speaker, for the way in which you have conducted this Parliament Meeting in a professional way. Mr Speaker, I also wish to thank the Clerk and staff members of the National Parliament for good work and arrangement during this meeting. Mr Speaker, without your wisdom and the necessary support from your staff, the meeting would have not been successfully deliberated on as much as the House had done.

Mr Speaker, I must take this opportunity to thank the Member of Parliament for North-East Guadalcanal for taking up the leadership position of the CNURA government. Mr Speaker, at this juncture I wish to thank my colleague Ministers for the very good work done in the various departments and ministries they are assigned to. Mr Speaker, it is not an easy task because being a minister of the Crown you are looking after your constituencies and at the same time dealing with important matters of the government. But you have done very well.

Mr Speaker, I wish to thank the Opposition Leader and my Colleague Members from the other side for asking many questions and making comments on this floor of Parliament. In particular, Mr Speaker, I would like to thank the Member of Parliament for West Makira who, after talking had left the Chamber, although he was talking about how important it is for us to remain in this House to hear what I am saying. Mr Speaker, I want to thank him as he is one of the veteran and senior man of the government, and so I respect him. What he said in this House is true, very true. We were voted in by our people and they have very high expectations of us. So unless you have important matters to attend to you should be absent from this House. Our people are not living with us but are living in the rural areas, and so what the Leader of Opposition and the Member for West Makira have expressed are true things, and I agree with them. Mr Speaker, people in the rural areas expect us to attend meetings because they have voted us to be in here to listen and to talk on important things for them.

Mr Speaker, you know what happened? This meeting is one of the longest meetings ever experienced since we were elected into this Parliament. This is good so that we can talk about things and try to put things that can help the government in order for it to carry out its work programs, rather than going to the media expressing things outside from this place. This is the right place for us Members of Parliament to debate and iron out issues so that we help the government.

I would like to thank the Opposition side, Mr Speaker, for its constructive contribution on this floor of Parliament for Ministers to take note of and implement in our various ministries.

Mr Speaker, I disagree with the Member for West Makira who mentioned that Ministers are always absent from their offices. Mr Speaker, I need to make it clear on this floor of Parliament that Ministers have two responsibilities. When they are absent from their offices they are perhaps attending to constituency matters or may be in their committees and when that is completed they return to continue with their work in their offices.

Mr Speaker, during my presentation when I answered a question here in Parliament, I said that there is going to be a suspension of the Auki Market and the jetty project. Sir, I want to clarify that the land issue with regards to the project location has been resolved and the Malaita Provincial Government and the National Government are working together with landowners to sort out land issues. These land issues must be sorted out by the government in consultation with the Malaita Provincial Government. That has been done already, and I am happy to inform this honorable House that work is progressing very well within the time schedule.

Sir, at this point in time I would like to appeal to landowners for their understanding so that they can work together with the central and national government so that important infrastructure of that nature can be made available in the rural areas, Mr Speaker. We must know that even in the rural areas no infrastructures can be built on air, they have to be built on land. It is important that landowners, and I appeal to you for your understanding with the National and Provincial Governments when such infrastructures are planned to be built in our places.

Mr Speaker, I would like to assure the Malaita Provincial Government and its people that the construction of the Auki Market and jetty is still on. Landowners have already agreed to release the remitted land, and arrangements have progressed very well at this point in time.

Mr Speaker, my officials will be traveling to Japan this weekend for the opening of tenders, evaluation of tenders and the signing of the contract. The delegation will also include the Provincial Secretary of the Malaita Province.

Mr Speaker, at this juncture I wish to make some clarifications on a confusion made in the media and even the public on the three EU Marine Infrastructure projects in 2007 that have implemented within our provinces. I will be concentrating on the three infrastructure wharves for Malaita Province.

Mr Speaker, I would like to clarify the three wharves that were supposed to have been constructed under the EU funded marine infrastructure. Wharves that were to be constructed under the project are Atoifi, Bitá'ama and Su'u. Mr Speaker, the Su'u one has been fully completed. For the Atoifi one, the outer part of the wharf is about to be completed except a little bit from the coast way and up to the dry landing. That one will come under the Ministry of Infrastructure Development. Therefore, for anyone to say the government is not committed or is ignorant is not true, Mr Speaker. The true statement is what the Minister of Infrastructure Development is currently informing Parliament about.

Mr Speaker, I would like to inform this House on the implementation of the 2008 funded projects under the Ministry of Infrastructure Development. Sir, you will agree that the 2008 Budget was passed in this House in April 2008, and my Ministry had only four months to make a difference. I wish to inform this honorable House and the public that all our projects have a fairly standard process in their implementation.

To achieve a proper implementation, Mr Speaker, quality expending of funds must be done. It is important that the processes are properly done and they are doing so right now. The processes must include scoping, surveying and costing. There is also the preparation of tender documents for the tender process as required under the Financial Instructions. Sir, all these activities must be done before actual implementation of civil works. I can proudly say that my Ministry has done a lot within the four or five months of this year.

Mr Speaker, I can assure this House that the funds allocated for projects under my Ministry will also be spent by December 2008. Already, the National Transport Fund allocation has been used up in the last five months.

Mr Speaker, with the performance of my Ministry so far, I would like to thank the CNURA Government for allocating funds for infrastructure development in the 2008 Budget. Sir, my Ministry will still require funds in 2009 and beyond for the upkeep of our transport infrastructures. I would like to thank the government for allocating funds in the Supplementary Appropriation Budget. These funds will sustain the Ministry until December in the implementation of its projects.

Mr Speaker, I will touch very briefly on the outsourcing of projects within my Ministry. Sir, on the implementation of projects, my Ministry does not have the

manpower or the machinery for the implementation of projects. All of our project implementation is done through outsourcing to the private sector.

My Ministry, Mr Speaker, depends very much on the private sector in the implementation of budgeted projects. Sir, the process for outsourcing of projects is as specified under the Financial Instructions where tendering procedures is a requirement. My Ministry will not entertain malpractices as anyone may claim. Thanks to the Ministry of Finance, all payments submitted have gone through Financial Instructions compliance.

Mr. Speaker, that there were complaints verbally made to my office and even directly at me that some contractors were being awarded projects even though they do not have machines. This is a very important concern, and I wish to inform Parliament that I have seriously taken up this complaint. I will inform my Permanent Secretary and my staff to look into this complaint because we need to comply.

It is straight forward that if any contractor has been awarded projects but does not have machines to carry out those works, it will be immediately terminated because we want to meet the requirement that work is carried out in time. That is very important. I wish to inform Parliament that that kind of practice will not be entertained in the Ministry whilst I am there, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, at this point I would like to thank our donor partners, especially the transport sector. There are so many of them, but I wish to name a few that were very much actively involved in the transport sector of the Ministry. These are the ADB, AUSAID, NZAID, the Japanese Government, ROC and EU. Our donor friends have been very supportive in this sector, especially supporting the CNURA government's priority to be happily implementing existing transport infrastructures and where possible constructing new ones.

I am optimistic that the transport sector will establish its own sector wide approach program very soon and our donor friends have been helping my Ministry in this important activity.

Mr. Speaker, I am concerned that while the CNURA Government is trying its best in accordance with its affordability to be able to attract interested partners for the Medium Term Development Strategy (MTDS) it appears that the MTDS is being labeled as a shopping list. Mr. Speaker, I feel this is very degrading. This is the government of this nation, a government that is representing our rural people. This MTDS is an economic sector committee appointed by Cabinet to look at implementation of the 2008 development budget, and therefore for anyone to label it as a shopping list, is not right. This is a government and it will produce the very best that it can do for its people.

Mr. Speaker, I will comment on the private motion moved by the Member for Temotu Nende last Friday on the need to effectively manage and monitor the RCDF is very important. Members of Parliament are tasked with the huge responsibility of addressing policy issues and laws of this country. That is our duty. As such they must have time to study their papers and devote themselves to their ministries as ministers.

Sir, it is a sad experience that Members of Parliament must go through in the disbursement of funds. The name 'Rural Constituency Development Fund' is self-explanatory the purpose for which the funds can be used on. It is for financing of rural developments within our constituencies and therefore it is only right that (*electricity disruption*) where we live, what type of activity we are going to do, is the intention of this fund. I totally agree with the mover of this motion that it must be properly managed and regulated.

Mr. Speaker, I want to conclude my contribution by commending our public officers who have tirelessly performed to our expectation, the expectations of the government of the day. Public officers, especially in my Ministry have the duty to perform within established rules of the government, while at the same time maintain technical specifications affordable to the government.

Sir, I wish to stress here that public officers are here to serve any government of the day and I am sure they have been serving several past governments with equal ability. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, to generalize negatively on them would be unfair, not only on those public officers but to their families who have been supporting them to give their best to the government. I find that any delay in implementation of projects is very often because of inadequate funding.

Mr. Speaker, I take note of the sentiments raised by my good colleague, the Deputy Speaker and Member for North West Choiseul, which I agree with, is a real situation. What happens is that when talking about development, you are talking about infrastructure, and in order for any activity to take place in the rural area, it is very important that infrastructure must be put in place. We all know there are shortcomings, which many times made it impossible for us to implement our programs. But if we have enough resources, I believe any government of the day will build rural infrastructures like roads.

Mr. Speaker, before I sit, I want to take this opportunity to thank my people of East Kwaio. I am not campaigning because the general elections is still far, but I want to thank the chiefs, the church leaders, the men, the women and the children of East Kwaio for their continuous support for me during this term that I am representing them in Parliament, and may be to continue into the future. I understand that it is not easy at times but I know they understand me on whatever situations we go through.

Mr. Speaker, as my constituency borders with the East Are Are constituency where the tornado took place, I stand here on behalf of the chiefs, the people of East Kwaio and church leaders to convey our condolences for what happened at Muki Village in East Are Are which destroyed their houses. I want to join the MP for East Are Are, and Minister for Mines to convey our condolences to the families who are affected at this very time. Mr Speaker we are saddened to hear of the tragedy and I am conveying this on behalf of my people whom I represent.

Mr Speaker, I would like to conclude my contribution to the sine die motion by saying that planning is very important in project implementation. Without proper feasibility studies there will be no proper plans and no project implementation. Therefore, there will be no quality spending and high unnecessary spending.

Once again, thank you Mr Speaker for giving me the opportunity to speak on this motion. Thank you, I support the motion. I resume my seat.

Sitting suspended until 2pm

Hon TORA: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to contribute to this very important motion of sine die moved by the Honourable Prime Minister on Monday.

Mr Sir, first of all I would like to thank you and register my sincere gratitude for your patience, understanding and able leadership in the way you have always guided the deliberation of this honourable House. Many thanks also goes to the Clerk and all Parliament Staff for the support services they have provided over the last four weeks to make this Parliament Sitting another success. Mr Speaker, a special thank you also goes to your Deputy, who undoubtedly also carried out his responsibility as Deputy Speaker.

Having said that, Mr Speaker, I now would like to make observation on some important issues that I personally feel requires urgent attention. But before I do that, Sir, may I take this opportunity to remind this Honourable House that our 30th Anniversary Celebrations are over and as advocators of good governance, I humbly request all colleague Members of Parliament to ensure those responsible for organising the constituency celebrations to start sending in the acquittals on the \$50,000 for the 30th Independence Anniversary Grant to my Ministry as soon as is practically possible.

On this note, I also would like inform this Honourable House that the account of the 2007 Earthquake and Tsunami Response Exercise has been audited and the report has been produced. I wish to thank the office of the Auditor-General for a work well done and to assure the Acting Auditor-General that my Ministry will seriously carry out the recommendations.

Mr Speaker, the two recent exercises that my Ministry has recently undertaken; namely the 2007 Earthquake and Tsunami Disaster and the 30th Independence Anniversary Celebrations have taught us numerous lessons. One obvious example is the practicality of these regulations, in a given situation. Time will continue to be a problem in the effective application of these regulations. Non availability of staff with the responsibility to make the processes stipulated in these regulations often becomes the greatest hindrance to the efficiency of the system or process. This often grossly undermines the intention of these regulations.

Mr Speaker, I am not saying that these regulations are unnecessary, but I am only highlighting the fact that many of these regulations urgently need review to make them practical.

Secondly Mr Speaker, except for the disaster responses, major undertakings that require more detail planning needs to be taken early to avoid last minute hassles that often resolves in the Ministry responsible being a 'sitting duck' for opportunists. Mr Speaker, this means that the budget allocations for such an exercise and/or event must be made available to the Ministry responsible as early as possible.

Mr Speaker, let me now briefly report on what my Ministry has done to date. Mr Speaker, one of my Ministry's responsibilities is to provide protection for the vulnerable members of our society. It could also include the youth of today if nothing is seriously done to prepare them for the difficult times ahead. It includes victims of natural and man made disasters; able and disable men and women who may be unknowingly pushed out of the mainstream because of the impact of social and economical development within our society. People who are at risk of disaster and a case in point could be the people living on the low lying atolls of Ontong Java and the artificial islands of Malaita.

Mr Speaker, my Ministry is doing all it can to help these people but may I also take this opportunity to call on every citizen of this country, Solomon Islands, to contribute in anyway we can to this important issue.

Mr Speaker, work on monitoring the progress of the shelter recovery for the victims of the 2007 Earthquake and Tsunami in both Western and Choiseul Provinces is continuing. Yes, it has been very slow but positive. The international NGOs are assisting the communities. In the meantime, other sectoral rehabilitations are also progressing positively, with the assistance of donor partners through the relevant sectoral ministries.

A disaster relief exercise that cost the government around \$1.6 million was carried out by both the National Disaster Office and the Guadalcanal Provincial Disaster Coordinating Committee for our people living in and around the Guadalcanal Plains, from Burns Creek to Aola, in January to the beginning of March early this year. Mr Speaker, the Ministry is indebted to those who have worked tirelessly in that exercise of helping our people. For this, I sincerely wish to thank the Guadalcanal Provincial Staff and the NDMO staff and all those who have contributed to the success of that operation.

In recognition of the invaluable services rendered by the churches, the CNURA Government has declared 2008 as the year of the Bible. Additionally, it has also financially supported the SITAG through SICA to produce and deliver about 2000 copies of the Pidgin Bible now distributed throughout the country.

Mr Speaker, for the first time the two main church corporate bodies representing all churches, SICA and SITAG were given the opportunity to fully participate in recent events of the 30th Independence Anniversary Celebrations and the launching of the Year of the Bible. They were fully responsible for the planning and coordination of three of the main events that marked the occasion; namely the reconciliation affirmation ceremony on the 2nd of July, the launching of the Bible of the 6th of July and the prayer breakfast on the early morning of the 7th July 2008. Indeed, Mr Speaker, it was a true indication of team work and the potential benefits of such relation to our people could be far reaching if further developed and made to work effectively.

The Ministry is planning to hold the first consultative workshop for all the churches before the end of this year, 2008. The objective of this workshop is to seek their views on how we can develop an effective network between the government and the churches to assist them in their role as nation builders.

Mr Speaker, the CNURA Government is determined to ensure that the Solomon Islands election process is effective, reliable and efficient. Since the beginning of this year, 2008 my Ministry has successfully conducted two bye-elections in the East Malaita and the Aoke-Langa Langa constituencies. This has given our local staff the experience they need to manage the next two bye elections for East Honiara and the Lau-Mbaelelea constituencies on their own.

The Solomon Islands Electoral System Strengthening Programme has been completed and approved. The implementation phase of the first three years of the project is expected to start around October 2008, when the Project Coordinator arrives in the country. Mr Speaker, it is a 10 year program with an initial period of three (3) years commencing when the Project Coordinator arrives in the country. In the meantime, Mr Speaker, interviews for the Program Coordinator is planned to be held next week. The project covers the following in its scope:

1. Strengthening the status, structure and capacity of electoral machinery;
2. Targeting legislative and policy reform;
3. Strengthening stakeholder engagement and awareness building capacity;
4. Strengthening capacity of the SIEC to manage and coordinate electoral activities,

Under Component 2 Systems of Elections, Mr Speaker our voting system will be looked into. One ballot box system was only used in the last general elections, while the other systems of elections; namely the Provincial and Honiara City Council elections still continue to use the old system. The idea is to adopt the same system for all three elections processes. Mr Speaker, on the voting systems, it is also envisaged that the program will also be exploring different voting systems used elsewhere.

Mr Speaker, work on the review of both the National Disaster Council Act and the National Disaster Action Plan has begun, following the arrival of a consultant, who is currently engaged by the SOPAC. As I speak, Mr Speaker, another workshop is currently in progress with the intention to seek inputs from stakeholders. It is expected that the review of these two documents will be completed before the end of this year to give more time to have the proposed bill ready for presentation to Parliament by mid 2009.

Mr Speaker, this is necessary because the current Act and the National Disaster Action Plan are more focused on disaster management than disaster risk management. It is imperative that we focus more on preventing disasters, as this could reduce major disasters that would result in heavy loss of lives.

Mr Speaker, because of the heavy cost involved in disaster responses and recovery, the need to mainstream disaster risk management in our national development plans is a serious one. Under this comprehensive disaster plan review, SOPAC is also willing to assist the Ministry to develop a 15 years National Strategic Development Programme that should bring Solomon Islands to the same level of alertness similar or even better than our senior regional members such as Australia and New Zealand.

Mr Speaker, work on developing standard operation procedures for our disaster management personnel has been completed and ready for submission to Cabinet for endorsement. These are international standard operation procedures applied internationally.

I am pleased to report here that significant strides have been made in the area of improving the management of civic affairs of this country. The recent NGO-CSO Stakeholders Consultative Workshop held in May this year, 2008, demonstrated the willingness of civil society organizations to help in improving this area. However, Mr Speaker, the focus of the workshop was to develop a common MOU, which was meant to formally establish a working relationship between the state and civil society organisations and our NGOs in Solomon Islands.

Mr Speaker, the MOU is a milestone in regards to proper control of the activities of CSOs in the country, and in general the civic affairs of Solomon Islands. It provides the government with a basis to effectively control the CSOs through its umbrella body, the DSE on matters or issues of which both parties may consider as relevant to be included in the proposed CSO's bill and to ensure that the bill is ready in time to be presented to Parliament by June 2009.

Mr Speaker, churches continue to be useful partners in the development of this country and their networks are well established but still under utilised. And if you were to fully utilise the usefulness of these networks, the most urgent need now is to empower them. Mr Speaker, the challenge for many, if not all of our church organisations is the ability to support and sustain this existing network structure. A research recently funded by AusAID carried out by one of our PhD theological students has confirmed that many of our church organisations also lack capacity to take on any additional responsibilities. They just do not have the resources required in terms of finance, manpower and the knowledge to do so.

In the area of sports development in the country, Mr Speaker, proper sporting facilities up to international standards may be a big ask from our sports men woman. But the fact remains that this is the only effective way to improve the level of our sports men and women. Such facilities must be built even in the rural areas of Solomon Islands to provide equal opportunity for our people to develop their skills in the sports they love. Good sport facilities and good administration guarantees good sports competitions, which in turn guarantees high level of performance. It is for this reason, Mr Speaker, that the CNURA Government places priority in sports infrastructure development. It is also the most effective way of improving the level of our athletes to effectively participate at the regional and international level.

On the national sports stadium development project, Mr Speaker, funding has been secured, as I have alluded to my the answer to the question asked by the Member for West Makira, from the Republic of China, Taiwan, who has also indicated its willingness to develop other sports facilities to help prepare Solomon Islands for the 2015 South Pacific Games, if Solomon Islands wins the bid next year in Cook Islands.

Mr Speaker, a Land Task Force appointed by the Solomon Islands National Sports Council has identified the current KG grounds, which covers the rugby and

soccer pitches as the most suitable site for the project. Initial consultations have been made with relevant authorities and the parties are now waiting on the Ministry of Education to give them agreement to allow necessary work to begin.

Mr Speaker, the critical issue here is the need to submit the architectural drawing for the project to the ROC Embassy before the end of 2008, and for the construction to kick off by mid 2009, certainly requires us to act quickly to ensure land is available between now and the end of October 2008.

Putting that aside, Mr Speaker, effective sports management remains a critical issue amongst all sporting federations. Today the Ministry is currently working closely on the issue with the Solomon Islands National Sports Council to aggressively deal with it. Sporting Administrations now, Mr Speaker, are called on to comply with the requirement of the National Sports Council Act. The Ministry will continue to assist the Solomon Islands National Sports Council to provide appropriate sports administration training for all Sporting Federations, especially in the area of financial management. The next workshop is planned for the end of this month and the focus of the workshop will be financial management and record keeping.

Mr Speaker, before I resume, I take this opportunity to thank all development partners, such as RAMSI, the Royal Solomon Islands Police, the private sector, churches, NGOs, chiefs and other community leaders, youth, children, women and individuals and for the support and contribution they have continuously render towards the social and economic development of this country.

Lastly but not least, Mr Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity once again to thank the chiefs, the church leaders, elders, women, men, children, youths and al the good people of my constituency for their continuous support and the confidence they have on me. I look forward to working closely with you in the years ahead.

Thank you, Mr Speaker, I support the motion.

Mr. GHIRO: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this chance to contribute briefly on this very important motion been moved by the Honourable Prime Minister. This motion, Mr Speaker, is a traditional motion and so I will contribute briefly on it. I will be very general, Mr Speaker, and not to bore us. I will also allow things to flow so that I can also give opportunity to other colleagues to contribute, because there is a time limit. Thank you, Mr Speaker for giving me a chance.

Mr Speaker, as a humble MP from Central Makira, I would like to begin by saying observing this Parliament, I would like to thank my other colleagues who have contributed, and would like to say that some of their contributions are valued; some are misleading, especially answers given by the other side of the House; and sometimes some of the comments given are confusing. That is how I have observed this Parliament Meeting.

Mr Speaker, on the meeting, this present Parliament Meeting has been going for almost six weeks. Members of Parliament have been summoned by the Clerk to come to this meeting to participate actively in the process of governing our country, Solomon Islands. You know, we are called to meet in this House to discuss and debate

constructively so that our country can go forward. But my disappointment is that when we come to meet in this place, we have been using public funds for allowances; whatever allowances we may collect, including food allowance, accommodation, if you make your own calculations you will see that a big amount of money has been expended for a meeting like this. That is my disappointment. Everyday we come here to talk about bills and unnecessary things, Mr Speaker. We should be very constructive in our talks and talk about things that will benefit our voters and ourselves, and Solomon Islands as a whole, Mr Speaker.

What I am trying to raise here, Mr Speaker, is like this; for the last six (6) weeks we have been expending much money for allowances, which you cry for every day, accommodation and transportation so on. Whatever you may want to call those, but it is expenses. Given that consideration, I want to remind you that in our next meeting please prepare government business so that parliament is not suspended everyday. This is a fact. Whatever you might say about it but I am talking about facts. These are the things that make us not to address rural development which we always talk about. It is money matters. Why are we beating around the bush, Mr Speaker? Let us get to the point. You may make comments but this is a fact. It is nothing but the truth.

Mr Speaker, because of the government's inability to organise itself, MPs have been summoned to Parliament Meeting which is unnecessarily too long. The amount of government business covered during this current meeting does warrant the time MPs spend here in town. It did not put its act together and prepared itself properly for this meeting. Those are the things I would like to raise. In fact, you may say whatever comments you would want to say but I am telling the truth.

Mr Speaker, on investment, we speak so loud here without realizing the problems of this country. The problem is that this country is sick economically. You may say whatever you want to say, Mr Speaker, but that is the truth. The only way for this country to move forward is for leaders to realise what the problem of this country is. We must realize this, Mr Speaker, and do not beat around the bush. As I mentioned earlier, some comments made here are valued; some are misleading and some are confusing. That is why this country is not moving forward. This has contributed to a falling economy. Leaders do not realize the problem of this country.

Mr Speaker, let me give you an illustration; bills after bills, but what is the outcome? Nothing, it is like an old man who goes to a doctor at the hospital telling the doctor that he is very sick. You know what the doctor tells him? The doctor told him to do some work like brushing of the coconut plantation, cut firewood; harvest cocoa plantation; and produce some copra. This is exactly what is happening to this government. It passes bills after bills without properly implementing them. Who will implement those bills? Do you realize the problem of this country is that it is sick economically? Why are passing many bills in this House? Where is the money to finance the implementation of those bills? You cannot implement those bills because there is no money.

I am telling the government that you can bring bills in here but mind you that they must be implemented. It is all about money; it is money matters. Why do we bring

bill after bill in here and no implementation. Do you realise that it is money matters? We have to be realistic and do things that are affordable to this nation. Stop dreaming, Mr Speaker, because it is not time to dream but it is time to work, Mr Speaker, it is time to work. The problem is that this country needs people who can think broadly so that they will broaden the economy of this land. That is the problem. People have been talking too much without realising the problem of this country.

The economy of this country is sick and we need to broaden it, like the MP for Central who has been putting cocoa, copra and timber to the market. That is the base of our economy. Where do you make your economy? Is it from the sea? Mr Speaker, I telling you all plainly right now that this is the problem. I am not beating around the bush.

If some of you do not know how a cocoa looks like you drive to Alligator Creek and see what a cocoa plantation looks like. The coconut is there. More money comes from those two commodities. We must provide more money to develop those crops because that is where we collect revenue for our economy. That is where we broaden the economy of this land. You do not have to dream. Do not be brainwashed by foreign attitudes and techniques. We are here to put more money into copra and cocoa. Do you know how we have survived the ethnic tension? It is cocoa and copra. Do some research so that you know? Why do we not put enough money there? I am questioning you, Mr Speaker, and I am serious. I am not here to joke and to play marbles with you but I am serious.

Do you know that I am the only one who is doing those things, and so I can tell you that the only way forward for this country is to put more investment into copra and cocoa or related crops? Do you know that? Do not be brainwashed by foreign investment. You know what the word 'foreign' means. It means foreign, thus all foreign investment is foreign money that is going back to their countries. You should come up with policies that safeguard us and our traditional crops. That is where we should put more money in because that is how the economy can generate revenue to grow. There is nothing else, Mr Speaker; nothing else.

I am not saying here, Mr Speaker, that other investments are not good. Those would be surplus for Solomon Islands. Build on what you have, existing ones before you talk about investment. That will add more money to this country. Do not talk about something that is foreign to this country. You talk about what you have. I am telling you the truth. I have been in that process and so I know what I am saying, Mr Speaker. Do not try to blind people by talking about something that is not conducive to this place. We are confusing our people. I have done that, Mr Speaker, and so I am asking you to do it as well.

Mr Speaker, you must know that since Independence the government of Solomon Islands' movement and progress has been from A to Z, Z to A, A to Z, Z to A. That is what has been happening, Mr Speaker, but we do not realize it. If you do not understand that then leave this place and let others who know come in to replace you. That is true, because the only way forward is to broaden the economic base of this country. Where will you put it? Rural development! That is where the hope of this

country and this nation is, and nothing else, Mr Speaker. We should not be beating around the bush.

I want us to see that for the last 30, 40 years CEMA, for example, has been concentrating on housing estimate, shipping, but what is CEMA for? It speaks for itself, Mr Speaker, its commodities export. Is it doing the right thing? Is the Minister responsible sleeping or what? This is because we should be putting things right, Mr Speaker. We have been here for a very long time now, talking to each other as if we are telling custom stories. It is not time for custom-story telling, Mr Speaker. We must be serious in addressing all these issues because something is affecting this country.

Why are we leaders coming here just to make jokes and make fun of each other? We must be serious. Do you know why I did not contribute many times? This is because I do not want to waste my time. I am a wise man from the East. I must be contributing to issues beneficial to me and my voters, and that is it. Why are we beating around the bush?

Mr Speaker, the problem here is commodity. You know we have forgotten the system we have been doing for so long. We have been surviving on subsistence agriculture. Are you aware of that? That is how your grandfather and my grand father survived; it is through subsistence agriculture. It is now time to commercialize, Mr Speaker. It is now time to commercialize and produce, Mr Speaker, copra, cocoa, tapioca, pineapple and you name it.

Why are we looking to heaven when everything is in our hands and it is within our country? The only thing we have to do, Mr Speaker, is market. CEMA speaks for itself. Has it done its job properly? It is not, Mr Speaker. It has been busy on housing estate and shipping for the last 20 years.

Minister, how are we? How are we, Mr Speaker? Are we serious in improving this economy to its best? I mean these are the problems that as Leaders we should be identifying.

Why are we talking too much and not realizing that we are moving backward? We are moving backwards, Mr Speaker, backwards. The evidence is shown by how our currency is like nothing but a mere piece of paper. What else should I say? I am saying everything I should say. Everything is in your hands Mr Speaker. Do something to survive this economy. It has fallen already. Haven't you realized that? Where are the economists? Where? Are you asleep! What is AUD\$7.00 to SI\$1.00 Solomon Islands? I do not want to be involved with such currencies. I want a currency that has a ratio of \$1 to \$1 to other currencies. Why are we talking too much without realising these things? It is time that leaders address the problems of this country. We must be serious, Mr Speaker.

People must vote people who can think broadly so that we can move forward. We do not come here to play marbles, Mr Speaker. We come to contribute constructively to issues affecting this country. The problems that I have raised are real problems this country is facing. I have already stated that some comments made in here are good while others are misleading and some confusing. That is the problem with us leaders. Do you know why their comments are like that? It is because we do not

properly identify the problems of this country. This country is sick economically and so the only way forward is development in the rural areas where all resources are based.

I am also sick, Mr Speaker, to hear that there are a lot of resources in Solomon Islands, such as trees. We want money, and it is not the resource. It is the way you extract your resource into hard cash; economists, this is what we want. We do not want to talk about resources without money. You know what? Implementing programs in this country requires money so do not talk about resource, but policies that safeguard us.

Mr Speaker, I would like to make a few comments on logging. Mr Speaker, many MPs who have spoken said that by 5 to 10 years time there will be no more trees. That is what we are saying here. I do not know who is advising you. I do not know, but it could be true, Mr Speaker. The need is that the government must draw good policies to safeguard forestry.

Supposing trees are planted, it will come to the same number of cubic metres that have been shipped out of this country. But we never do that, Mr Speaker. Why? Sleeping is the problem here. We sleep; leaders never identify the problem. Why can't you think about these problems and address them.

Replanting is what the government should be doing and nothing else, replant trees that have been harvested from your land; replanting. We talked too much without realizing these things. That is the main problem here. We seem to be taking courage in speaking loudly and jumping on whatever we say but that is not the point. We have to get to the point, Mr Speaker.

I would like the government, my good Honourable Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister to be serious of what I have just said because the economy depends on us putting more investment into the rural areas because they are the resource owners. When we depend on foreign investment, that is a surplus, Mr Speaker. Before we talk about foreign investment we should concentrate on rural development. That is where we can broaden the economic base of this country.

You may say whatever you want to say, Mr Speaker, but I am talking about my experience. How many of you are marketing cocoa in the market? None of you, Mr. Speaker. So listen to what I am saying as it is the only way forward, the only way forward, Mr Speaker. The economy is sick, and so how are we going to diagnose it so that we can give it the dosage, Mr Speaker? These are the things we must identify.

Mr Speaker on behalf of my constituency and family I would like to thank you all for your hard work and patience for taking the chair until we finish this meeting.

With those remarks, I am 100% in support of the motion. Thank you.

Mr SOALAOI: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to contribute very briefly to the motion of *sine die* moved by the Prime Minister earlier on this week.

Mr Speaker, I must thank the Prime Minister for a motion which enables us Members of Parliament to say what we see fit to contribute on the floor of Parliament as compliments to the ruling government and all Members of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, there are about seven points I want to touch briefly on and very quickly before I sit down. The previous speakers have expressed appreciation for the way the meeting has been conducted, and I share the same sentiments. I am very grateful for the way we have been looked after during the meeting, especially the timely disbursement of allowances, Mr Speaker. Some of us depend on that for survival unlike the previous speaker who survives on earnings from his cocoa production.

Mr Speaker every time we listen to the word 'potential' in this Parliament, I think if there is any word that has been said more often in this Parliament then it is the word 'potential'. We talked about the potential of leaders and the potentials of this country. Mr Speaker, some of us are becoming sick and tired of hearing this word 'potential' and wonder when are we going to see this potential turned into reality?

Mr Speaker, we are yet to see the full potential of this country which is blessed with natural resources; I guess more blessed than other countries in the region, Mr Speaker. You talk about marine resources, you talk about forest resources and other agricultural commodities, Solomon Islands is one of the blessed countries in this region. I believe it takes genuine and serious leadership to really turn things around, and I believe we are beginning to see that in this country. Leaders are beginning to talk sense in this Parliament.

Mr Speaker, I guess we are going out of the transition where people sometimes we do not want to listen to others, like what I have just did, when I referred to the Member for Central Makira. No, we can compliment our colleagues by referring to what they say. Sometimes it is disheartening for me to hear a fellow colleague standing up demeaning another colleague Member who has just spoken, Mr Speaker.

In fact, Mr Speaker, I agree with some of the things the Member for Central Makira has said. I think it takes leaders to talk sense and start working for the welfare of this country. I believe time is right and I am hopeful that we are just about to turn the potential of this country into reality.

I believe, Mr Speaker, all of us here agree with me that this country is a blessed country and we have a lot of potentials that we are yet to turn into something that will benefit our people.

The next point I will briefly touch on is infrastructure. The Minister responsible for the Ministry is here and I want my Minister, as I have mentioned earlier to take my statement as a compliment, and not as a criticism. I will be making statements, which I hope will be taken as consideration for improvement.

The Ministry of Infrastructure, to me personally, I believe that is the Ministry that should be given the most resources in order for us to advance this country forward. I believe all of us know that without basic infrastructures in place we cannot do much, in fact we cannot do anything without infrastructures. Different parts of this country need different types of infrastructures. I also believe that this country will never go any further without the existing infrastructures. We must put additional infrastructures. We must extend our roads and we must build more infrastructures in order for us to see this country or our economy becoming an economy that will benefit our people, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, when we talk about roads here in this House some of us feel out of place. That is what I am trying to say that different parts of this country need different types of infrastructures. To some of us, the only form of infrastructure that can be meaningfully utilized to ensure that our people participate in economic development is shipping.

I am not saying this, Mr Speaker, because you all want to own ships but I think it is a point that must be made because it has been almost 12 years since we have been asking for a ship. I am the third Member of the constituency and it still remains our priority. We can talk about anything that is colorful that our people might want but in the end shipping remains our priority. I believe that if only people are given the right form of infrastructure, we will be able to see new opportunities opening up in areas that I referred to today as non economical routes or areas that are not contributing to the economy of this country.

I think it is our responsibility as leaders to ensure that if a place is not contributing to the economy, we initiate something that will encourage those people or will take those people on board to ensure they contribute to the economic development of our country.

I am saying that, Mr Speaker, because those places used to be very economical and all of a sudden they become uneconomical. I guess all of us know that came about when the government started its privatization exercise on shipping.

The Ministry of Infrastructure, as I said is a Ministry that should get a good amount of resources in order for us to ensure our economy grows. Like I said without infrastructures we will never do anything much to ensure our economy gives us what we want.

When we talk about agriculture there is no agriculture in Honiara city, Mr Speaker. When we talk about fisheries, fisheries are in the constituencies. When we talk about other things relating to rural development, we are talking about the rural areas. Those things are found in the constituencies.

Mr Speaker, I believe that if only our budgets are formulated in such a way that resources are allocated or targeted towards improving or fully utilizing those sectors in the constituencies, we will not see any changes in the very areas that we want to develop.

Having said that twice now, Mr Speaker, I will continue to hold and believe that we are running a system that is no longer helping us. I think it is time for a change. People who can make the budget are there but I am saying this because if the budget is to help us then I think it should have helped us a long time ago. There was an example I cited during my previous contribution where I said that Papua New Guinea is seeing a lot of things in the rural areas because constituencies are given \$10million to fund their constituency plans.

With regards to government employees, Mr Speaker, instead of continuing to commend our employees I will continue to encourage them. I feel that we must continue to urge them to work even harder, not only our employees but I think all of us have to work extra hard.

We are looking at countries that have gone past what we are experiencing at the moment, and it is good for all of us to realize this is the road that we must all travel. We want to be like the USA now but USA has also come through the same road. And I think there are sacrifices that we need to pay. Our people need to realize that they need to work to develop their country regardless of how much the government is paying them. I feel sorry for these employees when they cannot afford to meet their family demands because of the size of their families, but I also believe that we need to pay the sacrifice before we start to see some good things.

In terms of education, Mr Speaker, I must commend the Ministry of Education for ensuring that our schools are still running. The only area that I wish to comment on is the area of our teachers, which I believe needs to be monitored. We are seeing teachers in Honiara while schools are on and there is no reason why these people should be in Honiara. They are being paid to teach but we see a lot of them in Honiara.

I was a teacher and I know these teachers and when they turn up in Honiara I ask them whether they are on holiday or not and they would tell me that school is still on. The question is why are they here in Honiara?

Schools, Mr Speaker, need to be monitored in such a way to ensure the government knows how the schools are run. I believe, Mr Speaker, this old saying that “in the past things were okay, now things are in their worst stage”, and that saying in fact is true for many schools in our country today. Schools that we attended in the past that used to be good schools are no longer like that good standard today.

Mr Speaker, I think the Ministry responsible needs to monitor our schools. And I know there is a unit within the Ministry of Education that is responsible for monitoring of teachers. I will continue to encourage them to monitor the schools otherwise that unit is not properly monitoring the teachers, and that is why they did not stay in their schools but come to Honiara whenever they like.

Mr Speaker, in terms of agriculture I believe one of the things that should encourage us to put more effort into developing our agricultural sector is increase in the price of goods in the shops. Mr Speaker, one thing that is changing the disease pattern in our country is the increasing price of even market produces. We are seeing people sick with not infectious diseases but with lifestyle diseases, Mr Speaker. We cannot even afford to buy a good number of vegetables in the market because vegetables are even more expensive than goods in the shops. I guess that should encourage us to put more effort into developing our agricultural sector.

I believe that after the Supplementary Appropriation we now have about \$27 million for rice development, Mr Speaker, and I hold the belief that unless we concentrate on large scale approach in the development of rice in this country, we are only putting more pressure on existing smallholder rice farmers, Mr Speaker. I would like to encourage the Ministry responsible to ensure that if there is any national project that is being considered, for example, the Metapona Rice farm, I believe that will be the only way that will relieve those of us here in Honiara from the high price of rice imported from outside.

I am not saying that we should not assist our farmers in the provinces, but what I am saying is if we are to see the reduction of prices in the shops with regards to rice, I think the large scale approach to rice farming would be the best way forward, Mr Speaker, because smallholders are not producing enough even for themselves to eat, and I do not believe the rice they produce is cheap, Mr Speaker.

I have been to the provinces regularly and I found out that there is not much difference between the prices of locally produced rice and imported rice. There is not much difference. To me 50cents difference is not cheap. The locally produced rice is not cheap, Mr Speaker, and the only thing that I continue to reiterate is that I think on top of those assistances we are giving these smallholder rice farmers, we need to seriously look at re-establishing large rice farms, Mr Speaker. I think we can all recall the former Solrice Farm. Many people are saying that rice produced by Solrice is much cheaper than rice from outside. Let us think seriously about that again Mr Speaker.

In terms of our forest resource, Mr Speaker, I believe there needs to be a proper and comprehensive management mechanism put in place to ensure that this resource is used in a sustainable way. I think we waited too long and now we realize that only five more years and our forest resource will run out. The best thing we can do for our next generation is to start the management approaches right now.

Mr Speaker, I think a lot of us are worried when we heard our forest resource is going to run out. I do not believe it will run out. We have a lot of forests, Mr Speaker, and the only thing we need is a mechanism that will allow us to harvest it sustainably. That is the only thing we need on this forestry sector.

In terms of our environment and health, Mr Speaker, one thing that is becoming very obvious is that solid wastes are directly released into rivers and sea fronts. I do not know whether Members of Parliament are aware of this, but having witnessed this myself, I am saying this because it is very, very dangerous for our health.

There are businesses and individuals whose sewage systems are connected directly to the rivers and even into the seas. I think we need a proper solid waste management policy that will ensure all sewage systems are piped into tanks and then pumped and removed somewhere where they can be used.

Mr Speaker, I can name some of the places this thing is coming out from but what I want to say is that we need to seriously look into this because it is not good for our health. Our rivers and sea fronts are meant for our people to enjoy.

If you go past the Mataniko River, it saddens me sometimes to see people swimming in there. But if you go up the river you will see pipes coming out, and every time somebody presses it, it goes directly into the river. Mr Speaker, I think those are the things that we leaders need to be concerned about. If we are concerned about the health of our people and the safety of our environment, these are the kind of things we should be looking at. I do not know if any one of you has seen this or some of you might know, but I believe you will agree with me that this is a health hazard. Even big organizations that talked so much about health and environment, some of them it is their systems that were piped directly into the rivers and the sea fronts.

Before I conclude, Mr Speaker, I believe this country is where it is today as a direct result of what leaders have embarked on in the past. Mr Speaker, I am saying this just to encourage us as leaders. We always come under fire since we enter Parliament, and it is becoming a fun for people to criticize Members of Parliament in the media, on the roads and everywhere. People are also losing respect for leaders. I think some people have reasons why they criticize leaders, but what I am trying to say, Mr Speaker, is that I think we need to live up to moral standards as leaders elected to lead this country. That would justify why our people should follow us. We will have no reason to tell people to follow us if we do not live up to sound moral standards, Mr Speaker.

Sir, it is embarrassing for people to publicly call us "conman". I am sorry to use that word, Mr Speaker, but I do not know any other word to replace that word with. That is why I feel as though I do not want this job because that is what they are starting to call us with. But I think it is our actions that made our people to start calling us such names.

What I am saying here, Mr Speaker, is that we leaders need to live up to some kind of moral standards. We started not to be ashamed of what we should be ashamed of. I think we can only blame ourselves for what people are saying about us because of the way we are right now.

We can only blame ourselves too, Mr Speaker, for where our economy is right now. We can only blame ourselves for our security situation. We have no external threat but we seem to be afraid of ourselves. Mr Speaker, we can only blame ourselves for the standard of living of our people. No one will decide what the people should receive from the government but it is this House; it is us the 50 Members of Parliament.

I am not saying this, Mr Speaker, because I am a straightforward leader and I am accusing you. No, Mr Speaker, that is not the point. What I am saying is I think we need to justify why people should be following us. We need to justify why we should direct people to do what we want them to do.

I think it is enough of the common saying that "you do what I tell you to do and do not do what I do". No, Mr Speaker, that is not the way we should lead. I believe time is right for us to make a change because this year is the Year of the Bible.

Mr Speaker, we can joke about prayer and joke about the Bible, but that is not right. When we stand up and talk in here our people are listening to us. Because this year is the Year of the Bible I encourage all of us to make a change. If we do, I believe it will change the way we think about our country, it will also change the way we think towards our fellow countrymen, our constituents, and towards the development of this country.

I believe, Mr Speaker, it only needs genuine and serious leadership to ensure that this nation becomes the so called prosperous Solomon Islands. I hold the belief that this country is the best nation and will be a prosperous nation. I encourage all of us, Mr Speaker, to be serious and genuine about what we are saying here and what we are doing for our people.

We are not here to show off; we are not here to tell people that we are like this and that. No, no, Mr Speaker, we are here to ensure we tell people this is what we are

going to do for you and then we do it. That is what leadership is all about. Leadership is all about telling people that I can do what you are looking for. Leadership is all about ensuring that a citizen of a nation is well looked after.

Mr Speaker, I have said a lot of things and before I finish, I must thank you once again, Sir, for the opportunity. I must thank the Prime Minister once again for the motion of sine die. I must also thank the Ministers for ensuring the government keeps functioning. I must also thank our Opposition Group, especially the Leader of Opposition for ensuring that we are being checked. I also thank backbenchers for the support they render to our government. Please take whatever we say as compliments and not as criticisms. If you have to take it as criticisms then please take it as constructive criticisms. The only hope we have is that what we are saying becomes useful and should be used for the right purpose, Mr Speaker. We do not want to say anything here that will be used to spoil our people.

With that, Mr Speaker, I support the motion.

Mr. WALE: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity to contribute very briefly to this motion. I thank the Honorable Prime Minister for moving the motion.

Sir, this has been an interesting meeting for me, and I think I speak for my Honorable colleague, the Member for East Malaita that it has been a very steep learning curve for the two of us. Sir, we did not receive any briefings from your Office nor an induction as was done after the general elections, and so we have attempted to learn as we go and give it our best shot.

Sir, I do not say this as a complaint against your good office, but as a mere statement of fact. Of course, there is the risk in on the job learning that one inadvertently takes in the good and bad practices. I hope we will be granted the discernment to avoid too many pitfalls.

I have observed with interest the level of debate in the House from both sides, and I think it would be fair to say there is some room for improvement. Of course, there is the mere political point-scoring but more substantive debate will improve the intercourse over policy and direction that government brings to Parliament.

Sir, I have been impressed with the performance of both the Leader of Opposition and his deputy. Also, Sir, the asking and answering of questions has also been interesting. I have been led however to form the opinion but may be we are a bit too casual in this process without giving full cognizant to the fact that this is an important aspect of parliamentary oversight.

Sir, I am not sure that we need reminding that Parliament belongs to the people of this nation and must be treated with the greatest of respect. Of course, political expediency often dictates the level and depth of intercourse on the floor but intercourse that does not add value to the body of knowledge or direction on any given issue could only remain at the level or form that may even subtract substance. In this regard, we carry a solemn responsibility to ensure there is meaningful dialogue and debate in the House; debate that contributes. It is incumbent therefore on the government to come to the House prepared to inform the people as accurately and honestly as is possible.

Conversely, Sir, the Opposition must play an active part to test the accuracy and honesty of such information.

Mr Speaker, this is not a gathering of individuals for their personal interests, although this has been a problem that is perhaps creeping in. We represent the people who own this Parliament and in whose behalf and benefit the executive government is conducted. These are foundational principles in parliamentary democracy, Sir, and we trivialize them to detriment of our democracy. In this regard, Sir, there ought to be some form of legislation that could prescribe and regulate access to information in the custody of government by the opposition.

Mr Speaker, we want to promote open responsible and rationale government. It follows therefore that we do not fear inspection and attack but rather we welcome it as an indispensable part of ensuring good government. It is bad government when we scheme to deprive the Opposition of information that would allow it to play its role better. Parliamentary debate, Sir, is lowered in such situations and the ultimate losers are the people of this country.

Sir, I am not here to point fingers at anyone but merely expressing an observation of successive governments. It has been a natural instinct for governments just as it is natural for MPs to act one way when in opposition and quite another when in government.

Mr Speaker, I have been greatly encouraged by the increasingly proactive role played by the media in both the coverage and the reporting of parliamentary business. Admittedly, Sir, there is still some way to go but there has definitely been improvement. As the policy we as leaders must encourage this important part of democracy to be robust and to grow into maturity.

Mr Speaker, how can we inform our people of the business we transact in this House or what the government intends to do or is doing without the media. As politicians tend to be frugal with truth and are most creative with it often, the people's right to know what is being conducted in their name becomes very important. Sir, it is in this regard that the media becomes an indispensable part of any robust democracy. However, Mr Speaker, the media cannot act as a mere notice board on which anyone can pin up anything on.

Sir, the media has an onerous responsibility to process the information it gathers before it is published. In such processing of information, there must be some reference points that will help to guide how information is interpreted and presented to the public. Mr Speaker, we politicians and governments tend to demonize the media when we perceive them as not in our favor, and perhaps for good reason. But we need to give them support and encouragement to do their job well because it is the key to our people getting an objective understanding of what their parliament and government are doing. Sir, it is not outside the bounds of possibility that government or parts of it are conducted for the benefit of a few. In such a situation, of course, Parliament would play an important accountability role, but the media would become the strongest tool of the people to bring government to account where executive government controls the numbers in parliament and obsessively uses it or abuses it.

Mr Speaker, the government has set itself a very ambitious reform and development agenda. Very ambitious, because of the budgetary constraints we face and the necessary fiscal discipline we must exercise to ensure responsible financial management. The constraints and disciplines are necessitated by the basic fundamental fact of scarce resources to meet a diversity of needs. It is precisely because of the situation that government must have a clear sense of direction, and few strategic but realizable priorities. It is my observation that all governments that have had the privilege of running the affairs of this country have fallen to the temptation of treating everything as priority, and therefore spreading our scarce resources too thinly across a diversity of fronts and ending up with low yield as a result. Mr Speaker, we need to liberate ourselves from the tyranny of wanting to do everything all in the lifetime of a single political government. By now, the policy of this approach ought to be clear to us after so many years.

Mr Speaker, the role of donors in the development of our country is an important one. But our experience has also been clear that donors often have their own priorities and set projects. The need to align government and donor priority is great and will not happen smoothly or overnight. In this regard, I am encouraged by the progress made by both the GCC and CNURA Governments with the donors to ensure alignment of priorities.

Sir, there has been a lingering suspicion on the part of donors that their funds would be misallocated at best or worse misappropriated if not controlled by themselves. And there maybe good basis for this, but the challenge is both to our leadership and to the donor community to work towards overcoming this. In this regard, Sir, the debate over the motion for the government to consider better mechanisms for the delivery of development funds for constituencies has been positive. Mr Speaker, we are all agreed that the principle behind it is a fine one; getting resources directly to the people. What requires review is identifying the most effective and efficient mechanism for doing it.

Sir, the control of the RCDF has been a significant part of this trust between donors and government and MPs. Sir, if we stand back from the situation to gain an objective vantage point, however, difficult that maybe we can see why this is the case. Sir, I need not deal further into this matter but suffice to say that if we MPs agreed that the objective or the overriding objective is that resources go directly to the people and to achieve developmental objectives, we would also be prepared to try other delivery mechanisms that could be more effective in that delivery. Sir, we may find there is great liberation in not having to manage the RCDF resources.

Mr Speaker, the number of candidates contesting the two bye elections that are currently running are phenomenal. It is arguable but one could say that a greater of them are only candidates because of the perceived attractions in quotations of the RCDF. This is, of course, a perception that is greatly fallacious. The role of an MP is an important one that requires better understanding and certainly protection from prostitutions.

The RCDF has had the tendency to prostitute the role of an MP. Mr Speaker, it would make an interesting study to see how much time an MP gives to RCDF related matters against time spent on national issues. Sir, if we are honest we would admit that most of our informal discussions that take place between MPs is about RCDF and related funding arrangements. Sir, we demand that priority be given to the payment of these funds even at the risk perhaps of stalling payments for other essential services. And this is to be expected when members of the highest accountability body in the land are given responsibility for funds that directly benefit their electoral standing in their constituencies.

Mr Speaker, how many of us expect to be measured by our performance in parliament, government and in our contributions to national issues as opposed to our performance in handling of the RCDF resources? Mr Speaker this is a great prostitution. Even the people become preoccupied with the RCDF and they do not demand better leadership at the national level. This can be a vicious cycle that would be hard to break out of if we do not master the political wealth to stomach the difficult decisions required.

Mr Speaker, the passage of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Bill is a significant step forward, and I congratulate the Honorable Minister for bringing that Bill to this House. We, national leaders must encourage our people to embrace the process and to participate fully in it. The new found openness, repentance, forgiveness and hopefully restitution that this process will trigger may bring a spiritual rival to our country; one that we desperately need. The fruits of this of process will yield benefits into this country we will be singing about for a long time to come. But it demands trusted leadership.

Sir, the government is inviting Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu to visit the country early in the New Year as the Commission commences its work. Sir, he has verbally and informally agreed to make time for such a visit to this country. We all know his leadership to the South American Truth and Reconciliation Commission process and also his efforts globally in reconciliation. If he can make it, this will be a significant visit by a recognized Christian leader of the global movement for reconciliation.

Sir, in moving this motion the Prime Minister pointed forward to government's intentions and legislative program for the end of this year. Mr Speaker, the reforms encapsulated in the Political Party Integrity Bill, the National Audit office Bill and the Independent Commission Against Corruption Bill will be significant indeed. Sir, we are all aware of the corruption and instability that plague us, and as pointed out by the Leader of Opposition, not only in our governance systems but right throughout our society. Therefore, Sir, we will be commencing the process of fighting these curses in the hope of bequeathing a better future to our children. Mr Speaker, our children deserve our best endeavors at living them an honorable heritage. I applaud the Prime Minister and the government for these intentions and look forward with great anticipation to their eventuation.

Mr Speaker, in conclusion and as I was outside the country at the time of the death of the late Auditor General, I want to take this opportunity to publicly appreciate the significant contributions he made to increasing the profile of accountability in this country. Sir, his was the spirit of 'David against the Goliath' of lack of accountability. Mr Speaker, in his honor and to our benefit it is important that the government takes the utmost care in ensuring that the replacement Auditor General is someone above reproach with no questions hanging over his or her head. This office, the champion of accountability deserves our zealous protection and support.

Sir, I thank also the Deputy Speaker for your able leadership over the running of meetings of parliament. Sir, also your staff for the able way they have been able to assist Members of Parliament and Committees of Parliament.

Sir, with these very few remarks, thank you for your indulgence and I support the motion.

Hon MANETOALI: Thank you, Mr Speaker, I also like to join this debate on the Motion of sine die moved by the Honourable Prime Minister on Monday this week. I thank the Prime Minister for this motion. I will be very brief in my contribution.

Firstly, I like to thank you, Mr Speaker, and your Deputy for the control of the parliamentary meeting and the level of leadership demonstrated.

Sir, we have now come to the end of this Parliament meeting, and of course it is a very long one. Mr Speaker, there were bills debated, motions, questions and answers during the meeting.

Before I go on to talk further, Mr Speaker I wish to take this opportunity to acknowledge a few people. Firstly Mr Speaker, I would like to thank the Prime Minister for visiting Isabel Province in June this year. It is the first time ever for any Prime Minister of Solomon Islands to visit a lot of villages in Isabel Mr Speaker. Normally Prime Ministers only visit the main centres and villages. During the Prime Minister's recent visit to Isabel, the Prime Minister has visited remote villages and highland villages and when the Prime Minister visits, people in the rural areas are very happy; more than very happy. I know this year the Premiers Conference will be in Temotu Province, and I am not sure whether any Prime Minister has visited Temotu as yet. Hence, it is very important for the Prime Minister to be present in Temotu Province because our people in Temotu will appreciate the Prime Minister's visit there.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, I wish to thank the Minister of Planning for humbling himself by going down to my constituency in May this year to hand over six water supplies to the people.

Thirdly, Mr Speaker I wish to thank the Leader of Opposition and those in the Opposition Group to be a check and balance for the government. Thank you for the job well done. Thank you for all your questions put to the government during this parliament meeting. I thank especially my friend, the Member of Parliament for West Makira for all the questions directed me to. In fact I enjoyed myself answering all the questions. I apologize if some of my answers may have not gone well with those who asked the questions.

What I will not forget, Mr Speaker, is the current Opposition in the vote of no confidence to say that the motion was by the people and for the people, when only eight Members of Parliament supported it. The principle of democracy is that, the majority rule. But my friend from West Makira says this morning that eight is the number in Noah's ark. Mr Speaker, the number in Parliament is 50 Members only but in Noah's ark I do not know. I only know that during the Noah's time all the animals and human beings that went into the Ark went in two by two. Sir, the principle of democracy that I know is majority rules.

Lastly, Mr Speaker, I wish to thank the Minister of Infrastructure and Minister of Finance in advance that after this Parliament Meeting my two good colleague Ministers will give directions on first, Police and Prison development project to be funded and worked on in the 2008 Budget. Secondly, the road from Haevo/Visena/Koregu, the borderline of Gao and Maringe, to be funded and worked on in the 2008 budget.

Mr Speaker, Solomon Islands is a country made up of islands and the islands are politically grouped up in provinces. We have nine provinces headed by the Premiers. Provincial Governments are agents of the National Government in the Provinces. The Provinces are where our rural people are born, live and die. The province is the home of the majority of people of Solomon Islands.

Let me touch on three important things, so important to the rural people. The first is education. It is our duty that we must ensure that all our children must attend school. Today there is one major hindrance for our children to their education; school fees. I thank the government that there is free education as from next year from Class 1 to Form 3. Education is very important to this country because people are our human resources.

Secondly, is medical. We need to train more nurses, doctors and health workers. We need to have more of these people to assist in eradicating all forms of illnesses. Our people need to have good health and a happy life. Our people in the rural areas need good water supply, sanitation, clinics and also good housing.

Thirdly, Mr Speaker, agriculture; Solomon Islands is a country that needs more local food. What we need is to improve on the present system of agriculture. The majority of people in Solomon Islands live on subsistence farming. They depend on their farms for survival. People grow sweet potatoes, taro, bananas, yam and rice throughout Solomon Islands. They also grow vegetables and look after small scale livestock. I would like to thank the government for giving high regard to agriculture, especially increase in rice funding. What I am trying to say here is that education, health and medical and agriculture are three important factors to this country.

Sir, I will now go on to the 2008 Supplementary Budget. I would like to appreciate and give thanks to Members of Parliament for their efforts and understanding in passing the 2008 Supplementary Budget. The Ministry now has adequate financial provisions to continue its core functions and implement government policies and priorities.

My Ministry will now embark on the much debated issue of gun compensation. Despite the concerns raised on the floor of Parliament about inadequacy of

compensation, the fact remains that the guns which were confiscated or surrendered were used guns or second hand and most were inoperable. The provision required to complete the payment of border allowances was not included in the Supplementary Budget but this would be addressed through contingency warrant.

Mr Speaker, capacity, development human resources. Capacity development of human resources in both the Solomon Islands Police Force and the Correctional Services of Solomon Islands continue to be a major focus. Both the Solomon Islands Police Force and the Correctional Services of Solomon Islands continue to focus on leadership development and management, developing the capacity of individuals. Both organizations are also focused on developing the capacity of institutions. We appreciate the work done by RAMSI through the PPF and Law and Justice Program on capacity development.

Sir, I now come to infrastructure development. The development of infrastructure continues to be a major focus in the Solomon Islands Police Force and the Correctional Services of Solomon Islands with funds provided by the Solomon Islands Government, RAMSI under the Law and Justice Program and the Republic of China.

Sir, the construction of the new Auki Prison is progressing well. Funds are provided under the Law and Justice Program. The project involves substantial injection of funds to Malaita Province, which should also benefit local contractors.

Mr Speaker, work is continuing on the new Gizo prison, which also has started but has been delayed because of squatters occupying the land earmarked for the prison. Work on the Kulitanai Base is now about to be completed. This is a very important post in terms of national security, it being a post at the border between Solomon Islands and PNG.

Lack of housing, especially in the provinces is a major impediment to capacity building. Availability of housing to the provinces would ensure the delivery of services by both the SIPF and the Correctional Services to where nearly 90% of the Solomon Islands population lives. Lack of housing is a major issue for the government. There should be a holistic government approach to address housing for government officers otherwise the good intentions of the government's policies will not be achieved.

Finally, Mr Speaker, Solomon Islands today is 30 years old. Most Members of Parliament in this House are more than 30 years. Some are 40 years, some 50 years, some 60 years old, and some maybe even 70 years old. Sir, we are looking after a child that is 30 years old called Solomon Islands and so Solomon Islands is in our hands. For those who have gone through long years, your long life experience be given to your child who is now 30 years old.

Lastly, thank you once again, Mr Speaker, for your control of this meeting and for the long hours of sitting. Thank you too, to your Deputy for the long hours of sitting and the controlling of this sitting.

I wish also to convey sincere greetings to all my people of Gao/Bugotu Constituency for their hard work and continuous support.

Mr Speaker, I support the motion and beg to take my seat.

Hon. MAGGA: Mr Speaker, thank you for allowing me to contribute briefly to the motion of sine die moved by the Prime Minister.

First of all, I would like to acknowledge Members who have contributed so far to this motion. Many issues have been raised and valuable opinions have been expressed on a wide range of subjects before this honorable House. I want to appreciate the hard work put in by Members of Parliament, in particular my colleague Ministers during the last six weeks, especially in relation to important bills passed by this honorable House.

I particularly thank the Minister of Finance for successfully bringing into Parliament the 2008 Supplementary Appropriation Bill which was subsequently passed by Parliament. This means Ministries can now continue with vital areas of operation where shortfalls have threatened the delivery of services to our people. The respectful manner in which we deliberated on issues of national interest at this level is highly commendable.

Sir, I want to take this opportunity to simply update Parliament on a number of issues connected to my Ministry portfolio. Sir, the question raised by the Opposition Bench during the deliberation has indeed helped the government in refining government focus on the six key areas in terms of budgetary allocation.

Mr Speaker, our Land Reform Legislation Development Program has caulked a fair bit of flex recently. But I am pleased to inform this House that the Government is more committed than ever to bring to this House a good Tribal Lands and Customary Titles Act. The Ministry continues to receive inputs from stakeholders, like most recently chiefs from the Auluta Kwara'ae area met and raised important issues with senior officials of my Ministry who are engaging actively with the Attorney General's Chambers on this matter.

An important overarching concern for Solomon Islanders on this area of Land Reform for economic purposes is the fear that reform might lead to them losing ownership of their land. The new legislation aims to address this by incorporating tribal group as landowning entities, which means they will hold perpetual estate titles over tribal lands in trusts on behalf of the group in much the same way as the Commissioner of Lands is under the Lands and Titles Act.

Right of usage will be given under FTEs to developers, investors from outside as well from within the group or by their trustees, chief or elders in relation to areas the group designates for economic development. Other portion of land will have to be preserved by the group for customary usage by group members. In this way, customary land can be opened up for more productive development.

In the related Land Reform Provincial Office Establishment Program, we have had a mixed response to date from the two provinces originally earmarked to kick start this capital development program. On one hand, land clearing and preparation of sites for the Guadalcanal Land Reform Office and staff accommodation at Doma are about to commence. Interactions between the Ministry and the Guadalcanal Province have been very positive. I acknowledge the Guadalcanal Provincial Government leadership action for allocating these sites, which demonstrates serious commitment to the Province's decision to pursue the Land Reform Program in the Provinces.

On the other hand, our ongoing interaction site identification in conjunctions with the Provincial Government and Provincial Land Centre in Auki, Malaita Province has achieved a 50% success rate to date. We had hoped to get strong commitment for all five sites to cater for four staff quarters and one office building. We are yet to secure a suitable site for the office within town. As such, since time is not on our side for the draw down of budgeted funds, the Ministry now has to seek Cabinet's approval to move to a different province in the remaining part of this year and to return to Malaita Province in early 2009. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Infrastructure Development has begun tendering out architectural works for the Provincial Land Office and staff residences.

With the TOL Survey Projects aimed at converting Temporary Occupational Licenses (TOL) into Fixed Term Estates (FTEs), out of the 12 areas covered in the scope of the project, draft subdivision planning for seven areas is ongoing at a relatively moderate pace. Draft subdivisional plan for three areas are completed and are ready for TIS capturing to be coordinated by the Ministry's GIS Team.

Plot survey is being done on one area whilst processing of TOL conversion were surveyed and plotted lots and parcels by the Director of Physical Planning and the Commissioner of Lands is currently ongoing in two areas. These are the Kaibia and the Master Liu Settlement. We are confidently optimistic that surveying of the seven areas will take place before the end of the year. With the eminent recruitment of four part time staff, we hope to put up the pace of the subdivision drafting work to ensure surveying takes place via outsourcing by October or November. Once surveying is completed the conversion process to FTEs will be greatly hastened.

Mr Speaker, on the Auluta Project, in addition to the three that have been surveyed to date, surveying of 15 lands declared ready in the Auluta by a private surveyor who is now managed under arrangement within the Ministry of Agriculture. My Ministry will receive the survey reports from the surveyor and the Ministry of Agriculture for vetting and registration of Perpetual Estates (PEs) in the name of landowning groups.

Under the recently approved Supplementary Budget, the Survey Division now has additional funds for survey work connected with a national project. On the Gold Ridge Project, I am pleased to inform the House that negotiation on payment relating to the Bubulake relocation site is well advanced and a letter affirming this to the Gold Ridge Council will be issued shortly.

Sir, I am also pleased to inform the House that the Solomon Islands Government component of \$80,000 to complete surveying demarcation of all government properties in Honiara made available under the Supplementary Budget, will soon be disbursed. This important work aimed at protecting government properties from unscrupulous land dealings will continue under arrangements similar to the AusAID-funded Component within the confines of the government's Financial Instruction and outsourced to the private sector.

Sir, so far 260 houses have been surveyed out of a total of 548 in Honiara under the AusAID-funded component with a further 91 to be done. About 197 properties will

be funded under the Solomon Islands Government component. The completed ones are in the Rove, Lengakiki, Central Honiara and Lawson Tama areas. The KGV School and other major government institutions, for example, the National Referral Hospital will also be covered. Further appropriation under the 2009 Budget will take the program to the Provinces.

Mr Speaker, a new Public Service Rental Scheme Policy has been approved recently by Cabinet for implementation by the Government Housing Task Force through the Government Housing Division of the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey. The Government Housing Task Force recently approved a new sale of government housing policy and an option paper on alternative government housing solution. This will be submitted to Cabinet soon for adoption as government policy for implementation. A further paper on illegal occupancy policy is presently being debated by the AG's Chambers and we expect to progress the work further towards adoption by the national government as soon as it gets the legal clearance.

As I speak, sir, a week-long training for responsible key officers across the whole government on government housing maintenance model is underway at the Quality Motel conference venue facilitated by the Government Housing Division of my Ministry and the AusAID-funded Solomon Islands Government Housing Management Project, Phase II. The 40 participants will be well placed to address maintenance issues connected with ministry, institution and provincial allocated houses under their respective portfolios. Maintenance is a major issue with the government housing stock and it goes without saying that improvement and the quality of government staff accommodation will bear dividend in improved delivery of services for our people.

At this juncture, Mr Speaker, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Members of the various working groups and the Government Housing Task Force for their diligent commitment and assiduous efforts in putting this policy together. This involves provincial tours, consultations and compiling of reports by the appointed working group providing the empirical bases for the policy framework.

Permanent Secretaries and senior officials have been constantly putting their time and effort into the work and they must be commended. These efforts, Mr Speaker, are aimed at filling policy gaps identified by the Office of the Auditor General that have been left unattended. I am aware that this is only the beginning of a long and exciting journey. The implementation of this policy is where the 'rubber meets the road' and this is where the government and all stakeholders will need to put their money where their mouth is; where commitments are tested and goodwill must prevail.

Mr Speaker, I must also thank the machinery of the government under RAMSI for the invaluable support provided for this work to the Solomon Islands Government Housing Management Project Phase 2. This project ends in June 2009 and the recently completed mid-term review has identified areas for continued support. The Government will soon take a decision on this and will inform our bilateral partner of the project in due course.

Having said all these, Mr Speaker, there are still gaps to fill and rooms for improvement on certain implementation program of the Ministry, and as a Ministry we

are committed to strive on to improve ourselves and those affecting our work programs and those benefiting from our service delivery.

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

Hon. LONAMEI: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for allowing the Member for Maringe/Kokota to contribute briefly to this motion moved by the Prime Minister on Monday.

Mr Speaker, this meeting has been a very successful meeting. Successful in a sense, Mr Speaker that the government is trying to put new bills at this meeting and also the Opposition in its capacity of checking the government has also contributed very well. Mr Speaker, I think this meeting has been a very successful one for both the government and the Opposition.

Mr Speaker, on the review of RAMSI under the Facilitation Act, I think it is very good that we have put this responsibility to the Foreign Relations Committee so that the public can contribute expressing their thoughts on RAMSI. We, at Isabel Mr Speaker, support RAMSI very much and we want them to remain and we want them to be involved in other areas as well. Therefore, it is good that the public is invited to comment on the RAMSI issue, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, on the establishing of a management mechanism for RCDF, I am very happy and fully support the idea so that a management team or even this Parliament should come up with awareness programs over the radio or whatever means of medium. The awareness programs will help our people at home to better understand the role of Members and what sort of assistance they can seek from Members of Parliament and what they should not ask for so that we can all have the same experience.

It is not good that only Members of Parliament educate their people and try to hold awareness, talks because people will misunderstand us and will think that we are lying and are trying to hide or keep the money for ourselves. There must be a mechanism in place to safeguard Members of Parliament and also safeguard people at home on what assistance they can seek from Members and what they should not, Mr Speaker. Because at the end of the day it will be also the public that will raise complains saying that during the term of a particular Member of Parliament nothing eventuated with regards to development. Mr Speaker, I think a mechanism is good to safeguard all of us.

Mr Speaker, I would also like to thank my ministerial staff, especially the PS, my two Directors; the Directors of Communication and Aviation; the Advisor Mr Bill McGregor for his hard work in drawing up the new bill that was to have been brought before this House at this Meeting. Mr Speaker, I also thank the EPS and all staff members of my Ministry for their hard work.

Mr Speaker, I believe everybody wants to set new records and wants to put in history what they have done. Mr Speaker, I think the Ministry of Communication and Aviation has set a new record in history with our new bill. That is, it is the first time for a new bill to be put before Parliament for First Reading and then deferred to be disposed

of in the next Sitting of Parliament. I think we have achieved that in the records and history of this Meeting.

Mr Speaker, at this time I would like to thank the Republic of China (ROC) Taiwan Embassy for the many assistances it has given this country, especially the RCDF in which people are beginning to see tangible benefits at home. I thank ROC for the scholarships that were given to students to study overseas. I on behalf of the relatives and the recipients, the seven students who have received scholarship to study in Taiwan this year, would like to thank very much the ROC, the Ambassador and his staff and people of Taiwan for the assistance they have given to educate our students.

Mr Speaker, I would also like to thank the CNURA Government for the \$3.5 million that was given to the Isabel Development Company (IDC) for a cargo boat. It has been emphasized in here that ships are vital for nation building. I, on behalf of Isabel people thank the government for this great assistance. The people that have gone overseas to choose the boat have already returned and the team to bring the boat over here is getting to leave the country. Hopefully very soon that boat will be here.

With regards to the composition of the IDC, though it is a private company it is owned by all people of Isabel Province. The Provincial Government is the majority shareholder in that company. The Church is also a shareholder in the company. So in a way, everybody is a shareholder of that company and therefore although it is private everyone in Isabel contributes to it and shares in it.

Mr Speaker, I want to thank very much the Churches for their continuous prayers for all of us in here, both the government side and the Opposition. They pray for us every Sundays or even every day, and so I want to thank everyone for their continuous support. I would especially like to thank the Isabel Diocese. Sir right now as I speak their synod is underway and so I wish the bishops, clergies, and laities of the Isabel Diocese a very fruitful and prayerful synod.

Mr Speaker, I would also like to congratulate two new Priests who were ordained last Sunday on the opening of the Synod; Fr Griffin Hebala and Fr Enoch Anderson. I wish them both and their families a very fruitful and very rewarding ministry with God's people in the Church and people of Isabel Diocese.

Mr Speaker, I like to also thank my people of Maringe/Kokota for their continuous support of me while I am representing them in Parliament. Sir, for the last two years when I was in the Opposition and have remained with my people at home, they were very happy and comfortable. Now that I am here with the government, Mr Speaker, some of them at home are feeling that they are lost saying that because I am here in Honiara I have not been able to visit them. I want to assure my people of Maringe/Kokota not to worry so much, but continue on working. Mr Speaker, the support and the tasks I planned to do for you will still continue.

Lastly, sir, I want to thank your good self for your leadership and guidance of Parliament during this meeting. Thank you very much. I also thank the Deputy Speaker who has been sitting in your place during your absence, for his able direction of this House during those times. I would also like to thank the Clerk and all staff of Parliament for the continuous support they have rendered to us Members of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, with those few remarks, I also do not forget the wives of Ministers who come to make the floral arrangements to decorate Parliament during this meeting and also for their support and hard work in looking after our Ministers. I would like to say thank you to all the mothers. With that I support the motion.

Mr NUIASI: Mr Speaker, I too would like to contribute to this very important motion moved by the Prime Minister. Mr Speaker, this motion of sine die is a very important motion where each and every one of us parliamentarians who have been elected to represent our people in Parliament are able to contribute either for ourselves, our constituency and the nation Solomon Islands as a whole.

Mr Speaker, as other colleagues have already said a lot of things that I want to say, I congratulate them for leading us in their speeches saying things what I am supposed to be saying or what is supposed to be said on this floor of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, as parliamentarians, all of us are elected to represent our constituencies in here, and as such we have come into a system of government whereby we elect the Prime Minister, Ministers, the Leader of Opposition and other Members of Parliament. That is the structure that all of us belong to in this Parliament.

During this Parliament Meeting, Mr Speaker, there was a motion of no confidence moved, which to me is a right mechanism the Opposition has taken because it is a checking point on the government to see where it is going and how it is going and what needs to be done and what has it done in its leadership. Here I would like to congratulate the Ministers and backbenchers for their solidarity in staying together to ensure the motion is received in good faith and understanding of what the motion said during that time.

Several bills have gone through this Parliament and were passed, which to me is a move in the right direction, especially the Secured Transactions Bill 2008 that enhances the ability of our people to have access to lending institutions like banks so that they too will enjoy the benefits that only a very few people have been enjoying during the past 30 years or so.

Likewise, Mr Speaker, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Bill 2008 is a bill that is passed to enhance the Commission's work on ethnic related matters to actually carry out its work meaningfully and at the same time ensure it has the power to interview and request people to come before it to present before the Commission what they have witnessed or experienced during the ethnic tension period.

Mr Speaker, whilst all these bills have been passed in Parliament, it is only good if they are implemented, and implemented to the best of ability to ensure they help people of Solomon Islands to move forward in its aspiration to grow Solomon Islands.

Mr Speaker, we have also dealt with the motion on the RCDF, on how it should be managed and regulated. Mr Speaker, this motion was supported by all of us in Parliament, which is a good sign that we have accepted there should be regulatory measures in place to ensure we are not disturbed by our people on this RCDF funding. I am sure the government will take the motion seriously to ensure it is put in place so that

it assists Members of Parliament to have some guidelines in the disbursement of the RCDF funding.

Mr Speaker, others who have spoken revealed that they have already established a management and regulatory mechanisms in their constituencies on the disbursement of this fund. However, Mr Speaker, for those of us who have just come in, we have just started even if there were representatives before us for the last 30 years. We might not know if we are repeating the same things that have been done before us. This is a big problem before us to advance further in trying to implement the RCDF to the best we can to help our people in the constituency.

Mr Speaker, on the agricultural sector, I understand that there has been much talk of the Waisisi Palm Oil. I would only be very happy to see if this is implemented may be at the end of this year or the latest beginning of next year. The people of West Are Are have been looking forward to this project, and I can assure you that once it starts people will do whatever they can do to help this project go forward.

Likewise, Mr Speaker, even though the government might not be talking about the Wairokai Seaport, there has been a lot of talk about the Wairokai seaport in my constituency. This is good for the government to note so that if there is a chance for this seaport to be developed, you are welcomed, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, the Supplementary Budget we have just passed is a sign that the government needs more money to implement its programs. Now that we have passed the Supplementary Appropriation Bill we have only may be three months left for this supplementary budget to be implemented. I must ask the government, after this Parliament Meeting, to be serious in implementing this Supplementary Budget on programs that need to be implemented so that people can actually see tangible development happening in their constituencies.

Mr Speaker, the Southern Region of Malaita has about 40,000 people in population. But up until now there is no doctor in the southern region. We have to travel all the way to Honiara or either to Auki in order to receive that service. This is costing us huge amount of money. For example, Mr Speaker, just for a patient to travel to Auki from my village will cost that patient to hire a canoe, and the fuel itself will cost a person about \$2,200.00 to go and come back. When you compare this to the amount of earnings a villager is taking, it is actually exploiting the people of their income.

Mr Speaker, if there is need for a doctor to stay in one of our health centres in the Southern Region, I must say that it is now time for us to think about this. Likewise, Mr Speaker, we have been without an airstrip for the last 10 or so years after the Parasi airstrip was closed down because of disputes. I understand that there have been several requests put to the Ministry of Aviation to consider construction of a new airstrip. I understand that some of these requests have gone through formalities whereby certain areas within our region are qualified to have an airstrip. I urge the government to consider this seriously, because when it comes to emergency cases traveling by boat to Honiara or in a canoe to Auki is not the best option. It is a very risky option and sometimes we lose people on the way.

Mr Speaker, I would like to speak on grants to provinces. Provinces have been receiving grants from government monthly and some of these grants are very specific may be for road maintenance, shipping and so forth. I urge the Minister for Provincial Government to look into these grants and ensure that the grants are spent on specific tasks as indicated in the budget. This needs to be looked into because several thousands of dollars have been given to those specific important areas. If those grants are used on the areas they are specifically meant, it would have eased the situation of the National Government to spend money elsewhere and improve other infrastructures which are of need in Solomon Islands.

Mr Speaker, when we talk about teachers sometimes we blame them for coming to Honiara or even to Auki. However, I realized recently that the flexibility of banks for teachers to withdraw money in order to live and teach in schools is not in place. Therefore, it is obligatory on the teacher to travel either to Auki or wherever the bank agency is to withdraw money for him or herself. Sometimes it cost teachers more than what they earn fortnightly just to travel by boat to Honiara to withdraw money because the banks do not allow anybody else to draw money on their behalf. This is costing them several days in Honiara. This is a real situation, and I am asking the Ministry of Education to remedy this situation to ensure the time taken by teachers to travel to Honiara or the urban centres just to get their pay is reduced. I am sure there are means and ways to put things right for our people in the rural areas.

Mr Speaker, in relation to tourism, I am of the view that instead of an individual applying for a project in the Ministry of Tourism, it would be a better idea if tourism officers go to any particular province they think is viable for tourism, assess the place, ensure the viability of the project so that whatever money spent on tourism on a place is of productive achievement. Because sometimes we can have very good ideas when applying for a certain project but the location of the project might not be right. Therefore, as tourism is one of the key economic development activities in Solomon Islands, our officers should be sent out to do some feasibility studies or do community profiling to ensure activities are viable in a place before approval of any funding is done to ensure the project takes off the ground.

Mr Speaker, every one of us in here is a national leader, and the way we have been contributing has improved. This is a good sign of maturity in politics. However, in our growing mature we should ensure implementation also goes hand in hand with that maturity in politics.

Mr Speaker, without much to say, and as I have said that I stand here to contribute towards this motion of *sine die*, I would like thank the Prime Minister and his Cabinet Ministers for leading us this far. Mr Speaker, I would like also to thank the Leader of Opposition for having the checks and balance system in place and ensuring questions are asked to Ministers of the Crown to test the ability or test the faithfulness of Ministers in their offices in trying to carry out their activities according to policies of the government.

Mr Speaker, without further ado, I would like to thank yourself too and the Deputy Speaker for having shown us the management control which you have

displayed throughout the Meeting. It is not an easy task, however, with your capability and ability, you have been controlling us very well all throughout. I also would like to thank the Clerk to Parliament for ensuring her staff gets information readily in advance for us to use during this parliament meeting. I also thank staff of the various ministries for ensuring that they too support their Ministers in answering questions and ensuring the government of the day go the right direction.

Mr Speaker, without much to say I support the motion.

Hon. KOLI: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to contribute briefly to the sine die motion moved by the Prime Minister. Sir, I would like to touch on some of the key issues that are of paramount importance to health services aspect in our country.

Mr Speaker, a country grows up like a child growing up in her mother's womb but must be disciplined and productive in her/his later years.

Mr Speaker, first of all I would like to dwell on "Child Health" issues within our country. Mr Speaker, we all know that the population distribution of Solomon Islands is that of pyramidal shape; meaning we have many very young people. In fact, 47% percent of our population is children and we are all obligated to provide for their needs. One of these needs is to ensure they stay healthy from conception to birth and during their childhood period. The Ministry of Health has programs that address child health issues.

Hon Sikua: Point of order Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I move that Standing Order 10 be suspended in accordance with Standing Order 81 to permit the continuation of the business of the House until adjourned by the Speaker.

Mr Speaker: The question is Standing Order 10 be suspended under Standing Order 81 so that the current business might be proceeded with until adjourned by the Speaker.

*Standing Order 10 stands suspended accordingly for Parliament proceedings to continue after
4.30 pm*

Hon Koli: The Ministry of Health has programs that address child health issues. One of the important programs is the EXPANDED PROGRAM on IMMUNISATION (EPI). This program involves inoculation of babies at regular intervals from birth up to the age of one year. The inoculation prevents children from developing severe and preventable diseases of children that they used to die from in the past. Through this program, I am happy to inform the House that the last outbreak of measles was in 1993. The last case of confirmed polio was in the 60s. This program continues to strengthen the support of our traditional partners and we should be grateful for this.

Sir, with the support of the World Health Organisation and UNICEF, we have introduced a new vaccine this year for our children. This new vaccine is called PENTAVALENT. The PENTAVALENT vaccine has four of the past inoculations,

including a new one to prevent a common infection that affects the brains of children. Mr Speaker, this infection is one of the common infections that children get admitted with in hospitals and many die or develop complications like brain damage. With the introduction of this new vaccine, we will be able to prevent a lot more. In addition, children will be getting less number of injections, because of the combination, and we expect wider protection. As we speak, the pentavalent is now being rolled out to the entire country.

Mr Speaker, I would also like to inform the House that the successful introduction of pentavalent is made possible through a co-financing arrangement between the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI) and the Government of Solomon Islands. This co-financing arrangement is for five years. Over this period, the Government will increase its contribution significantly and eventually will be responsible for 100% of the payment.

Mr Speaker, on maternal health, this is another important program within the Ministry of Health and Medical Services. Solomon Islands still has high maternal mortality or death. The reasons for this are multifactor; this may include transport issues, cultural beliefs, financial difficulties, distanced health facilities and others. The factors that lead to disrupted maternal livelihood may be beyond the capacity of the Ministry of Health. I would like to remind every one of us of our responsibility to mothers of this nation.

Sir, the Ministry of Health is working on a Reproductive Health Policy that addresses the needs of women's health. The Ministry of Health has also recognized the need to involve men in women's health. This is being implemented in collaboration with UNFPA, ILO and the Department of Labour.

Sir, the other strategy to combat the ongoing maternal death is to train skilled registered nurses to better care for mothers and babies before and after delivery. This is being done through the Midwifery Training Program at the National Referral Hospital. This project was developed in collaboration with the World Bank and since then has been sustained by the Government.

Sir, the Ministry also from this year onwards, will be developing ways to reposition family planning. The Ministry intends to put the issue of family planning high on the agenda for all stakeholders to consider.

Mr Speaker, on malaria, the malaria program approach in our country has a number of donor partners that are interested in supporting our malaria program. This includes the AusAID, the Global Fund, JICA and the Rotary against Malaria. The new initiative is driven by the Ministry of Health & Medical Services, and this includes up-scaling of the control intervention and eradication approach from the periphery of the country and moving inwards. This approach is being supported by the above partners and experts in malaria control and eradication.

Mr Speaker, the up scaling of malaria control will be staged as soon as we have the logistics in place. This would mean that communities will be experiencing regular in-house spraying. They will have more long lasting treated bed nets available for use.

Communities will be engaged more in environmental control measures. People will be seeing a new medicine for malaria treatment.

Sir, meanwhile, in Temotu Province, a one step higher approach will be carried out. This is the eradication approach. The eradication approach has three stages, which include a preparatory stage, an attach stage and the policing stage. At the moment, we are in the preparatory stage in which baseline information, logistics and other necessary needs for the attach stage is prepared.

Mr Speaker, we plan that as early as the beginning of 2009, the attach phase will be launched against malaria in all parts of Temotu, except the malaria-free places where we would have mapped out during the preparatory stage. The attach stage may last a year or so, depending very much on weather and other factors. During this stage, people moving into Temotu will be tested for Malaria and treated if positive.

The last stage involves policing - who comes in and out. Doing blood tests on inbound people and treating them when positive. Monitoring of cases in the provinces will continue as well.

Mr Speaker, I am happy to inform the House that the Temotu Provincial Government is supportive of this initiative and has promised to assist in any way possible. This was relayed via the Malaria Reference Group that visited Lata early this year. Mr Speaker, from the lessons learnt, the hope is to replicate this in another province and this takes time and resources.

Mr Speaker, I would like to reiterate my previous concern about skilled and trained manpower shortages in our country. I would like to go through about provinces in terms of man powers. Currently we have trained 110 doctors altogether, of which 59 are working in the country and 12 are doing post graduate studies, whilst one third or 36 are working in Australia, NZ and regional countries. There are 4 are expatriates (2 Cuban, 1 Nigerian and 1 PNG doctor, and 3 Church Hospital Doctors. Sir, we are brain drained manpower, searching for employment opportunities elsewhere.

Mr Speaker, in the Western Province - Gizo Hospital, actual doctors working in Gizo Hospital is 4, amount of doctors needed in Western Province is 8 doctors, which means there is a shortage of 4 doctors for Western Province. For Malaita Province – Kilu'ufi hospital, the actual number of doctors working in Malaita is 5, amount of doctors needed in Malaita Province or the hospital is 9, which means there is a shortage of 4 doctors for Malaita Province. For the National Referral Hospital, the actual number of doctors at the National Referral Hospital is 41, the amount of doctors needed at the NRH is 50, and therefore there is a shortage of 9 doctors at the National Referral Hospital. For the Makira Ulawa Province – Kira Kira Hospital, actual doctors working in Kirakira hospital is 2, the amount of doctors needed in Makira Ulawa Province is 4 , which means there is a shortage of 2 doctors for Makira Ulawa Province. Sir, Temotu Province – Lata Hospital, the actual number of doctor working in Lata Hospital is 1, amount of Doctors needed for Temotu Province is 3 doctors, which is a shortage of 2 doctors.

For Central Province - Tulagi hospital, the actual number of doctors working in Tulagi Hospital is 1, amount of doctors needed in Central Province should be 3, which is

a shortage of 2 doctors. For Choiseul Province – Taro hospital, the actual number of doctors working in there is 2, amount of doctors needed in Choiseul Province should be 4, which is a shortage of 2 doctors. Isabel Province – Buala hospital, the actual number of doctor working in Buala hospital is 1, the amount of doctors needed in Isabel Province is 3, which is a shortage of 2 doctors. For Renbel Province, the actual number of doctor working in Renbel Province at the meantime is nil, there is no doctor there. The amount of doctor needed in Renbel should be 1 doctor, which is a shortage of 1 doctor. For Guadalcanal Province – Gorou Hospital, the actual number of doctor working in Guadalcanal Province is 2, the amount of doctor needed in Guadalcanal Province is 4 doctors, and so this is a shortage of 2 doctors. For the Honiara City Council, the actual number of doctor working at the Honiara City Council Health Services is 2, amount of doctors needed in the Honiara City Council Health Services is 4, which is a shortage of 2 doctors

On National Health Program - Reproductive Health, the actual number of doctor working in the reproductive health services and program is 1, amount of doctor needed in reproductive health services and program is 3 doctors, which is a shortage of 2 doctors.

On non communicable diseases – NCD, the actual number of doctor working on non communicable diseases program is nil, no doctor. The mount of doctor needed in non communicable diseases services and program is 3 doctors, and therefore this is a shortage of 3 doctors.

On communicable diseases – CD, the actual number of doctor working on the communicable diseases program is nil, the amount of doctor needed on communicable diseases program is 3 doctors, so this is a shortage of 3 doctors. On Health Promotion & Public Health, the actual number of doctor working on health promotion and public health is nil, no doctor, the amount of doctor needed on health promotion and public health service is 3 doctors, and so this is a shortage of 3 doctors. On Mental Health, the actual number of doctor working in Mental Health Services is 1, amount of doctors needed in Mental Health Services is 3 doctors, and so this is a shortage of 2 doctors. On Solomon Islands Malaria Training & Research Institute – SIMTRI, the actual number of doctor working in SIMTRI program is 1, amount of doctors needed in SIMTRI program is 4 doctors, and so this is a shortage of 3 doctors.

Mr Speaker, in total there are 59 Solomon Islands doctors in service at the moment and we are acutely short of 45 doctors. This shortage of doctors can be alleviated by this Cuban/Solomon Islands Cooperation Agreement. The Cuban Government has given Solomon Islands, as I mentioned last time in my presentation, 50 Medical Scholarships for 2007 and 2008, and award 10 Cuban doctors to serve in Solomon Islands as volunteer doctors. Already 25 students have gone to Cuba and are currently studying medicine at the Rafael Ferro Medical University in Cuba, and another 25 students have been identified and are ready to be sent to Cuba by the end of this month September 2008.

Mr Speaker, the Cuban Government has noticed that our 25 students have performed exceptionally well (all scoring A and B grades) and inevitably has given

another 16 Medical Scholarship for 2009. It has also reiterated that there is room for future negotiation for more scholarships. By the time they all graduate we should have a total of 66 doctors produced by Cuban government, which is a good number we should have.

Mr Speaker, the UPNG Medical Faculty & Fiji School of Medicine are not producing enough doctors. The UPNG only produces 5 each year and Fiji School of Medicine only five each year. Mr Speaker, but that does not guarantee us 10 doctors produced every year. In average there are about 5 to 6 doctors that graduate each year that either change course or failed. That is why we cannot meet the population demand. We are lacking behind in terms of doctor/population ratio. Our current ratio is 1 doctor to 9,000 people (1: 9,000). The World Health Organization's requirement is 1:500 people of populations. Therefore, this regional quota system we have with UPNG & FSM does not produce enough doctors to meet our demand in population growth. Therefore, the only way to mass produce doctors through Cuba's generous offer, which we must not let go but fully accept it.

Mr Speaker, concerning postgraduate training, our postgraduate qualification is the only way our doctors would improve their skills and simultaneously keep them abreast with latest development in medical science, and ultimately to confidently and professionally deliver effective and efficient medical services to people of Solomon Islands.

Mr Speaker, currently the Ministry of Health and UPNG are establishing postgraduate distance education mode implemented right here at the National Referral Hospital. The UPNG has recognized some of our local consultants here at the National Referral Hospital to help supervise, train and coach our local doctors who wish to pursue their postgraduate qualifications. This option is best for us because it is cheaper for us, we retain our doctors in the country; they are studying while service is provided, the training is tailored according to our needs, and high tendency for doctors to remain in the country than to be attracted some where else.

This is why we need the Government to support this in-country training program. The Fiji School of Medicine (FSM) also anticipates embarking in similar postgraduate in-country training. Already the FSM undergraduate training is now using the National Referral Hospital as one of its clinical training facilities.

Mr Speaker, after the tsunami has devastated Western Province, in particular the Gizo Hospital, the Japanese Government has taken on board the interest to rebuild the Western Province Referral hospital in Gizo. We are in our second phase in compromising a two storey architectural design and this will be presented to the Japan Parliament for approval. The Japanese Government expected the Solomon Islands Government to fulfill its contribution.

Mr Speaker, I therefore would like to ask the Government to fully support this project because this will:-

- Reduce referral to the NRH, and as such save more money by referring patients;
- Reduce operative waiting list;

- Reduce unnecessary waiting time in Honiara;
- Reduce unnecessary expenses;
- Reduce dependency on relative and wantoks in Honiara;
- Minimize social implications; and
- Minimize psychological implications.

Mr Speaker, concerning the Gorou Hospital or the Good Samaritan hospital at the Guadalcanal Plains, it was handed to the Ministry of Health and Medical Services by the Catholic Brethren of Italy. The Ministry of Health and Medical Services has currently posted two doctors plus several nurses to Gorou Hospital. The Ministry of Health and Medical Services is providing a budget and supplementing medical supplies to the mini hospital.

Sir, I, would like to thank the Solomon Islands Government for providing \$2million support to the Gorou Hospital. The Ministry is planning to build pre-fabricated houses for the Gorou Samaritan Hospital with sanitation.

Mr Speaker, on Afio Health Centre (Malaita) and Seghe Health Centre (Western) Province, both Area Health Centres will be turned into mini hospital and to be staffed with doctors. For Taro Hospital, there are eight (8) staff houses currently being built at Taro, Choiseul hospital. For Gizo Hospital – Western Province, there are 12 houses for staff being built at Babylon Valley (funded by AusAID) and another 6 houses to be funded by the Solomon Islands Government. The Solomon Islands Government funded staff houses \$3.2million for Malaita, Kilu’ufi hospital – 4 houses, as well as staff houses in other clinics throughout the country.

Mr Speaker, for the Gorou Mini Hospital, 7 staff houses are currently under the Ministry of Health and Medical Services to be built. For tsunami stricken areas in Choiseul and Western Province, 28 staff houses are to be built.

Mr Speaker, I now would like to come to my constituency. Mr Speaker, the non reopening of the Marau Airstrip is a grave concern to business houses and the traveling public. Could I make another appeal to the landowning groups of Marau Sound, chiefs and people of Guadalcanal Province as well as the Ministry of Communication and Aviation to continue dialogue to resolve the closure of this airstrip? Referral cases to the Central Hospital from the clinics in and around the area find it hard to come to Honiara especially during rough seas and bad weather.

Mr Speaker, both overseas and local tourists would like to plan Marau Sound as their tourist destination but impossible because of the closure of the airstrip. The Tavanipupu Island Resort and the Naitani Island Resort in Marau Sound could not be occupied by visitors because of the closure of the airstrip.

Mr Speaker, I would like to thank the “*One News*” officials for filming Marau Sound on the 25th to 30th August 2008 promoting Marau Sound as one of the natural beautiful sceneries and product of the country. Let us work hard hand in hand with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the Visitors Bureau in promoting tourism in our country.

Mr Speaker, the Marau to Kuma road has already been surveyed by AusAID as we all know. We are only waiting for any interested donor funding to fund this very road that has been neglected and abandoned for so long. It needs upgrading and road maintenance.

Mr Speaker, while waiting for road access to East Guadalcanal Constituency, I urge all my good people, farmers and fishermen to continue with your day to day business activities. Sir, to you coffee farmers up in the highlands, please grow more highland coffee. I know living up in the highlands is very hard but please face challenges, no matter come what may.

Mr Speaker, I urge all my good people to plant more root crops. Do not rely on rice. As we all know, at the moment, the price of one 20kg bag of rice is around \$210.00. Live simple lives but aim high with determination in reaching your goal as a farmer and rural fisherman. Cost saving must be always emphasized in your business dealings or ventures.

Mr Speaker, I would like to thank the chairman and the organizing committee for the reconciliation ceremony and peace building with our brothers and sisters from Malaita who attended this ceremony at Makaruka last week, which I attended. It was good to see each other down in the rural areas apart from Honiara. I would like also to thank the World Vision for involving and supporting. Sir, Guadalcanal Province, the Ministry of Peace and Reconciliation, RAMSI and I, all witnessed this reconciliation and forgiving spirit and peace building.

Mr Speaker, to you sportsmen and women from Marau to Avu Avu, as we are still in the reconciliation and peace building process to normalize ourselves, we are yet to support your endeavors. Mr Speaker, my people and I would like to thank the Solomon Islands National Futsal Team for representing us in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, the SIFF and the Kurukuru Soccer Club.

Mr Speaker, the Marau Fisheries Centre will be funded by the Japanese government and I hope my Minister of Fisheries is here listening. My good people and fishermen do understand that everything has time with planning to embark on the actual work.

Mr Speaker, a Member of Parliament is only one person. Not to put all the blames on him or her. Sir, may I ask, if I were to follow up all our funded projects. Are they implementable? Who is to blame, may I ask? Are we responsible people? Sir, the Marau Sound clinic Outboard Motor has been stolen, and who is to blame? It is a concern to me as the Minister of Health.

Finally I would like to thank you, Mr Speaker, and the officials for the day to day provision or whatever in our day to day meeting in this session of parliament meeting. With these few remarks, I support the motion.

Mr Speaker: To allow some comfortable situation for us to continue, I suspend the House for 5 minutes and then we will come back.

Sitting suspended for five minutes

Hon. TOZAKA: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me the floor to join other honorable colleagues to contribute to this traditional motion which brings to conclusion a culmination of five weeks of intensive work of this Parliament.

Sir, I would like to sincerely thank the honorable Prime Minister for moving the motion. I also wish to acknowledge with appreciation the Prime Minister's brief to Parliament on certain important issues of interest for our country that emanated from the recent Forum Meeting which he attended at Niue.

Mr Speaker, our attendance at the South Pacific Forum is very important at this point of time for our nation because it gives our Leaders of the Forum the opportunity to meet each other to discuss matters of mutual interest affecting our country and the region as a whole. Sir, despite things may not have fully worked out well for us, in our favor such as labor mobility in Australia, we should not give up but continue to maintain our good relation.

Sir, before I go a deeper into my contribution, allow me also to join other honorable colleagues to acknowledge with thanks the assistance and courtesies accorded to us by the various officers who have greatly contributed to the success of our meeting. They include, yourself, Sir, for the professional manner and your understanding in presiding over our meeting, and also the Deputy Speaker and Member of North-West Choiseul for deputizing in this meeting.

I also would like to acknowledge the Clerk to Parliament and her administrative team for their good work in organizing and managing the meeting, and the media, of course, in keeping our public well informed of the events and proceedings of Parliament.

Sir, I also would like to acknowledge the Special Coordinator of RAMSI, the Commissioner of Police for their security coverage of the meeting. I also thank the Leader of Opposition and his Group, for carrying out their role as Opposition in the House. Because of their check and balance role, they had a go at the motion of no confidence, which only consolidate the position of the government of the day.

In principle, if we mean what we say on the stability of government, this outcome should be welcomed and saluted. But unfortunately, our system does not work that way. It works the opposite, and this is a challenge indeed to all of us as leaders to overcome this for the best interest of our country. Sir, I would also like to acknowledge last but not the least, my thanks and appreciation to all public servants who have contributed in making this meeting a success.

Mr Speaker, my good friend the Leader of Opposition had asked three questions of public service matters in our meeting. I responded to all of them, and I gather they were to his satisfaction except one concerning the log of claims that have been quoted by one of the media outlets as rebuking Parliament for not answering the question. No, Mr Speaker, I did not intend to do that. The media did not realize that our meeting has not yet finished and that I still have the opportunity to revisit the question through other available avenues in our democratic legislative system and procedures as Minister responsible sees it fit. So, Mr Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity in this

motion to reaffirm what I had said and to elaborate for the information of Parliament that indeed when this government came into power there was no log of claims submitted by the Solomon Islands Public Employees Union (SIPEU). The SIPEU and the Government instead have a cordial working relationship because on this note that my Ministry and SIPEU have reached an understanding to work on matters that have not been addressed by past governments.

Mr Speaker, when the CNURA Government came into power, in recognizing the need to address the conditions of service and welfare of the public service, it decided to implement the legal minimum wage and the cost of living allowance (COLA). In consultation with the Ministry of Finance I have submitted to Cabinet for its deliberation the payment of COLA for our public servants. Sir, I am totally aware that this payment of COLA is going to affect our budget as far as our capital projects are concerned. But who could deny the fact that money is not an overriding motivating factor to human being. It is indeed a powerful influence in managing process, especially in the light of the current high cost of living. I believe our decision to grant an increase of wage and salary to our civil servants, is timely and will certainly contribute to a positive impact to our implementation of our various outstanding capital projects.

Mr Speaker, having said that, some other conditions of service of public officers that have been implemented are as follows. Briefly, the Housing Entitlement Scheme; my Ministry and the Ministry of Lands are exploring options on this. We hope we will attend to alleviate SIG's difficulty in providing accommodation for its workers. We also have addressed the discipline the Public Service, especially reviewing the delegated powers, with my Ministry now taking over the Level 7 and above and Level 6 and below to remain with the Permanent Secretary.

Mr Speaker, other matters which are an integral part of the Ministry's Corporate Plan include the review of the income tax threshold. Consultation on this and other welfare matters of public officers such as annual leave matters is continuing with the Public Service Union for collective agreement.

You see, sir, my Ministry is very much aware, alert of its industrial relations and responsibility with its workers and accordingly we have a very good working relationship with the Union. With the introduction of the Public Service Improvement Program, which I had an opportunity of making a statement about here in Parliament, we hope to further improve our industrial relations with our union.

Mr Speaker, the Honorable Member of Parliament for West Makira is not here but this morning again I pointed out about the advisors in the Public Service. I am quite aware of that and in fact I have already responded to the question that the Deputy Leader of Opposition has asked. But I am quite concerned that the Honorable Member questions this because this is an area that questions the credibility of the government in relation to recruitment of advisors and technical officers in the Public Service. He is my friend and I respect him. We know each other. We come from the same school of thoughts actually, but unfortunately I think at this stage he is living in a fools' paradise. In other words, Mr Speaker, he does not know what is actually happening in the Public Service. But I would like to take the opportunity that one time I will invite him to

actually come down to my Ministry to join in one of our meetings to be able to see what is actually happening in the machinery of government. Advisors and technical advisors who are holding posts in the public service are in fact recruited in the normal public service system. The recruiting agent remains to be the Public Service Commission. So when he made the statement that those advisors come in through RAMSI and we have no control of them, I do not accept his point, and I would like to correct it here in Parliament that that is not true. All posts that I have mentioned that advisors are to fill are all vacant posts but because our own local people are not yet ready to take over them, we have recruited advisors through the normal procedure of Public Service.

One important point I would like to reiterate here is that they are also not funded by SIG but through our bilateral arrangement with our partnership arrangements. I would like to reiterate that point on advisors and I would like to assure Parliament that we are in control of the recruitment of advisors and technical people that help us in areas that we are not yet ready to take over.

Mr Speaker, the Honorable Leader of the Opposition also asked an important issue in relation to provincial public service, a development to full constitution change. Sir, further to what I had said I would like to add that establishment of a provincial public service is only possible if the provinces are well developed, well financed, well managed and can function autonomously. Sir, in other words, without adequate skill and manpower assistance, they cannot function. Mr Speaker, this is another huge challenge facing us in our manpower planning and training development for our country in the future.

Mr Speaker, in mentioning training my Ministry is currently working in coordinating all manpower and in-service training programs. At the moment in-service training is being carried out, as you would hear all other colleague ministries and Ministers mentioning their own training programs in their respective various ministries and authorities, which is good. But we need to pull these effort and resources together in order to achieve our manpower training objectives. This means the task would be to identify training requirements of economy including both private, public sectors and arrange training for them in a coordinated manner both locally and overseas. For example, the private sector may require further training for their people in fields such as media, private medical or dentistry private practitioners require further training for their workers so that assist they will be able to assist them in their training requirements.

Having said this there are some honourable colleagues who have asked about their appointment of their constituency development officers following the review of engagement of the Public Service sir. My Ministry and the Ministry of Rural Development attending to the new appointments of CDOs or the Constituency Development Officers as advised by honourable Members of Parliament respectively.

Sir, we have just passed the motion to improve the management and control of RCDF. Therefore, inevitably the appointment of CDOs has been elevated to a new important height as personnel to initiate the institution of the role of MPs at constituency and provincial level.

Sir, having said this I have noted the Members of Parliament representing constituencies currently governed by provincial assembly has a very limited link with the provincial government system. We do not have a definite role to play in governance at the provincial level, and therefore, the coordination of development and service delivery is lost through a provincial plan, if there is such a plan at all in the province. A result due to inadequate links with the system and people it supposed to benefit. Sir, I note in the contribution of my colleague the Minister of Provincial Government that the reform being implemented by his Ministry would address this issue.

Finally, sir, this meeting has been a great learning process for all of us. We will need to learn from each other, learn from the past, to draw from each other's strength, and we will need to constructively manage the complex set of issues facing our country.

Sir, I would also like to take this opportunity before I sit down to thank the government and donor partners, their agencies for their assistance in addressing the rehabilitation program in my constituency in North Vella. I would like to thank them for their contribution to the rehabilitation program, which is going quite well. I am very pleased to acknowledge this assistance in my contribution here. To this end, too, I wish to convey my thanks and best wishes to all honorable colleagues as we leave this House to continue with our other respective roles in serving our people and our country.

Finally, but not the least, I also would like to acknowledge my people of North Vella, especially the chiefs, community leaders and people at large for their understanding and for their support; their understanding especially in the dual role that I assume here in the government as a Minister, as well as my responsibility to them as their Member of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, with these I thank you and I support the motion.

Mr OTI: Thank you, Mr Speaker, I know it is running late but this is normal practice in motions of *sine die* because of the opportunity that as much as possible, Mr Speaker, you must afford to each and individual Member to say what he has to say, particularly in the general observations of what has transpired on the floor of Parliament, and more specific to you also towards what a Members wants to say about his observations on how the country is being run, Mr Speaker.

At the outset also, Mr Speaker, I would like to thank the Prime Minister for this traditional motion. We will be congratulating him for this motion every time that he moves a motion of *sine die*. Mr Speaker, at the outset also I would like to take this opportunity to thank at the first instance, the Ministers, to you Mr Prime Minister for the work that you continue to do particularly when you took over the reigns of government in December 2007.

Mr Speaker, the first measure of our performance perhaps is premature, but is already on the horizon, that come December 2008 you probably will run out of excuses as to why certain budgetary provisions and performances on activities that you have promised to deliver to the nation, will perhaps at that time be more appropriate for us to talk about and measure. But if you think you have given your best over the last 18 months, we ask you to give extra best in the next four months remaining of the year.

Mr Speaker, I also would like to take this opportunity to inform Parliament on the progress and work that has been charged to the Special Select Committee that you have assigned some of us Members of Parliament to look at the privileges, immunities and Powers of Parliament. We hope to put before Parliament the report of the special committee in November/December this year. But before that, Mr Speaker, we will perhaps be giving some informal opportunity to Members of Parliament to have a comment on it generally because specifically the experts both in academic institutions, the legal fraternity and practitioners on the area of privileges, immunities and powers have already made their submission and upon which we will now be making our observations, recommendations for presenting to Parliament, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, we are going through perhaps an important time in our parliamentary democracy, whereby for a long time since 1978, and until last year when we activated and invoked Section 69 of the Constitution, which enable Parliament powers to enact legislations to that effect. Of course, last year Mr Speaker as we have said through a motion that I also moved, we adopted the House of Commons privileges and immunities from the Parliament of UK, which has become part of our law. With the intentions that are coming before us it will be interesting to see where we will go and that will be for Parliament to determine when we come to consider that particular report.

Mr Speaker, also at this juncture, perhaps a little observation on the debate and discussions that we have taken part on, on the floor of this House, I think I made a statement in the last motion, a private members motion when I said that when we are in Parliament the first and foremost we are a Parliament. You Ministers become Ministers and you report to Parliament so the Parliament is all of us, and not just those of us on the opposition or the independents and you on the government side. First and foremost, when you are on the floor of Parliament, you are wearing the hat of Parliaments, you are a Member of Parliament. In fact, this is what you are elected for. You are not elected to become a Minister or a Prime Minister.

I think this point is important because the exchanges, what we consult and dialogue on the floor of Parliament is not a matter of government versus the opposition. No, Mr Speaker, but it is Parliament, and we are equally responsible to the electorate, to the public at large that this Parliament belongs to them. I hope if there have been exchanges and heated debates between this part of the House and that side, it is not to be construed as a stand off between the two sides of the House, but rather perhaps it really shows how active, how sensitive we are to issues.

This brings me on the issue of questions raised by the Opposition, and I think it is also incumbent on backbenchers. You too have the right to question the government, to question Ministers, to question Ministries on what they are doing, their performance and so on and so forth.

We must get out of this issue whereby now, even to the extent that only two MPs have raised questions on the Order Papers everyday since the last four and half weeks or going five weeks. That does not give the impression that only those two Members are

active in playing their part, by questioning the government as to what is happening on matters of policy, on matters of law, on matters of finance and so on and so forth.

I remember, Mr Speaker, in our first meeting this year there was only one question and that question was from me. I also recalled that it was the only question. We also said that a lot of questions will come in later, and I think we lived up to that statement. In fact may be by the last sitting of Parliament this year there will be a lot more questions. In fact more questions will be coming, and it is not because we are here to score points, Mr Speaker. No, Mr Speaker, it is basically informing and the role that media is playing now, Ministers must be very careful on how you respond to these questions, because some people outside are clever than myself. I don't know about you guys, Mr Speaker, and so they can make heads and tail when we are here trying to work out where is the head and where is its tail. So it is absolutely critical, especially when we make reference to matters policy we are making reference to instruments, to documents, to statements that are made, which means therefore you have to answer and respond to questions within the context whereby the government is saying that it is going to do something things, in the light of its policies. On that note, Mr Speaker, we hope that we will come out, we will mature out of this issue about opposition and government, and that we are here to ridicule each other, far from it. I think that is not the issue. The issue is that these are matters of public interest; these are matters of national concern that we are raising on the floor of Parliament; the Parliament belonging to the people of this country.

Mr Speaker, towards the end of this month we will see the two vacancies in the House being filled. We have also just filled the constituency seats of Aoke/Langa Langa and East Malaita recently and therefore, it is also interesting that this is one of the Houses; this is one of the parliaments that the number of bye elections has gone up.

We do not know may be, Mr Speaker, but for the three cases we have gone through we know what their backgrounds are, but for the ones that are due, the issue why we have to hold bye elections are different. And we must start to look critically at Parliament as an institution of the people, particularly, and I might as well at this juncture make reference to the motion that I moved last week, and that is the motion Parliament has resolved and agreed that the government establishes a mechanism for the regulation and management of the RCDF.

Mr Speaker, what I presented in last weeks presentation was on budgetary allocation over the years and their implications on a Member of Parliament. Perhaps what has not been obvious but researches will also reveal the impact of this money on political stability or continuity in Parliament over the same period. You would see, Mr Speaker, that it has an impact. For example, if I may briefly relate to this particular issue, the turnover after every election has an impact on the continuity of Members of Parliament in this House.

Mr Speaker, when the fund was introduced in 1992, the first election thereafter was 1993. If you look through the electoral records you will see a very low turnover in 1993. This was because, like previous years, whereby the issues which people are voting on, and we will test this on the two bye elections that are coming up shortly, the first

signal it gives you is the number of candidates. That is the first signal it gives as to why the number of candidates continue to rise.

Mr Speaker, going back to 1993, the turnover of Members of Parliament in terms of sitting MPs not returning is very low. It means that returning of old Members of Parliament is high. The issue of funding, Members of Parliament being responsible for this and that, were not issues at those points in time.

The situation started to change in 1997 when people started to question Members of Parliament on how they manage the money and so they show you the door when election time comes, and the turnover started to go up. In fact almost 48 percent, I think if not 50 percent of old Members of Parliament return, and everyone else was new.

If you look at the figures of 2001 it is even similar. In 2006, the result is what we are seeing now; many of you here are new members. In 2010, Mr Speaker, and this motion is trying to work towards 2010. It is going to be even tougher and so it is very, very critical that we have to come up with a mechanism because of two things: One is continuity because it affects the way we look at Parliament and the country as a whole. Because every four years we are returning new Members of Parliament we have to start all over again. Every four years, we keep starting all over again. We never continue to maintain that momentum. We are outnumbered in here, Mr Speaker. There are very few fifth termers, may be one or two; a handful of fourth termers, a number of us, the Deputy Prime Minister, the Leader of Opposition, the Minister of Finance, the Minister for Health, we are very few, and the number of new MPs is more.

The implication on the focus on Parliament on issues and legislation is critical and is affecting this country, and that is one of the intentions of this motion. I think what people understand is the monetary part of it. The election, political party is not very obvious. I have to relay it because those are my observations that we can test.

But we need continuity in this Parliament, the Parliament of Solomon Islands. We need continuity and we need consistency. We have to be mature with each other. Every time we come in some say "you are senior MPs". No, Mr Speaker, the moment you win an election there is no seniority in politics. You win, the day you are declared winner, you are the same as the person that has been a long time in Parliament. There is no junior politician and there is no senior politician. No, Mr Speaker. There is only one qualification that when you win an election you are a politician, and therefore the need for us to work towards the objective of ensuring that our Parliament is steady, adding political stability because of the maturity that is in Parliament, it is important that we have to look at these issues affecting the tenure and the term to which parliamentarians are elected and when they must go out.

Indeed, Mr Speaker, I ask this question and in fact if I can relate to the opinion or a poll that was carried out last week, particular in East Honiara on what sort of candidates are you looking at, almost all of them were saying honesty or a candidate who is honest. The question I asked when I read through was honesty on what? It is honesty on money. That is it, and so if you remove the money and you ask them what sort of candidates are you looking at, what sort of answer do you think they will give, Mr Speaker? That is the issue. It is coming back to the role of Members of Parliament as

policy makers, legislators, but did they know? May be not, and this is where we have to revisit this whole process of educating them, providing awareness about governance, about parliament and so forth, Mr. Speaker. Otherwise we dragged this country for the last maybe 20 or so years to a situation where if we do not harness it quickly and arrest the situation, it will probably be too late.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to relate that because when I observe what is happening on the floor of Parliament, it takes my mind back to these situations, to those particular instances, why do we squabble, why did I not understand it, but it is to do with all these. That motion as I said, perhaps the government for that matter is looking at the responsive financial aspects of it. But the wider scope of that motion, we should be looking at the whole governance issue and the role of Members of Parliament. I hope it would be taken in that light and taken seriously. I know that this particular issue is before the able hands of the Deputy Prime Minister and I have every confidence that he will carry it forward, in particular with the support that the Minister for Public Service has just alluded to in his statement on the engagement of CDOs. In fact, Mr Speaker, increase Constituency Development Officers to two at least by 2009, as a gesture of moving to towards that direction.

Mr Speaker, finally but not the least I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and your office, and the Deputy Speaker for ably presiding over the business of this long Parliament. Mr Speaker, of course, we have transacted a number of bills, a number of motions, a number of reports, but there is a lot more. Some of the days we come in and adjourn, a number of reports that have come before this House to play its oversight role in the consideration of some of these reports, I think we can take up more of Parliament's time by going through these reports. They are part of the process of governing this country, especially reports that come under Parliament through your office, we take pride in supporting what Parliament is doing. In fact, with the UNDP strengthening assistance to strengthen our parliamentary processes, it has come a long way. The evidences are quite clear and I hope Members of Parliament appreciate the importance of this project, however, we might view it. But in terms of institutional strengthening of our parliament as an institution, I think this project has gone a long way. I want to thank your leadership, Mr Speaker, for initiating this project four years ago. It is taking roots and is bearing fruits. We hope that the years to come, we will realize how important this project has been and where we can do it ourselves without the assistance of our donor partners.

Mr Speaker, finally I would like to thank all your staff through you for ably serving us. I also thank the public at large for bearing with us. We know a lot of criticisms have been made against Members of Parliament, but it is not exactly an easy job, especially when we have a wrong focus of what a Member of Parliament should be and what his role are, we are bound to attract those kind of negative pictures and negative perceptions being painted on us. We are servants of the country and so we have to accept those criticisms. It is only ourselves that can tell them of our right roles and responsibilities, and the wrong perceptions they have about us, Mr Speaker.

With those few remarks, I would like to wish all of us all the best and please visit your constituencies in the next week. They are waiting for us to inform them what we have been talking about here in Parliament.

Mr Speaker, with those remarks I thank you for giving me this opportunity to contribute to this motion. Thank you.

Mr TANEKO: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Since this very important motion is for us to adjourn and given the limited time we have I will be contributing very briefly on point I think worth mentioning.

Firstly, Mr Speaker, I would like to thank the Prime Minister for moving the very important motion of *sine die*. I would like to highlight some points I have not been able contribute on in the debates. The first one is on Truth and Reconciliation Bill. The Truth and Reconciliation, I believe its objectives and reasons are very straight forward, and it is to establish a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, a body established for the Solomon Islands by legislation, under Section 59. This is what it is all about. The legislature, the Parliament making laws for the peace and good governance of Solomon Islands. I believe Truth and Reconciliation is a way forward. These are some of the things that I think will open a new phase in the history of Solomon Islands. I hope it will enhance our people socially, culturally and of course spiritually.

Mr Speaker, seeing the Constitution of the Solomon Islands, the supreme law of the Solomon Island, I believe the recognition of the customs as part of the laws of the Solomon Islands should be recognized. Custom reconciliation should be well kept and be carried forward under the law of the Solomon Islands. Where custom reconciliation has been conducted, the law should not interfere. That is my belief so that peace can reign and rule for our people. This is because the Constitution is in itself a law brought into our society, our land through the Westminster system so that we can be living in peace and harmony. I believe by allowing the law not to interfere with traditional customs of reconciliation, I think this will be a way forward of recognizing and strengthening our own traditional customs. But if law doesn't recognize our traditional practices, it is, I think a double punishment, which I believe is injustice.

One point too, Mr Speaker, I believe much has been said here in Parliament and there have been so many good recommendations. The question is, how much of those points being debated will be taken note of and be part of government policy? I think that is one thing we have to be mindful of. Anything constructive that has been said in here should be taken note of so that it could be included in government policy and strategy for tangible benefit to our nation.

Sometimes we ignore them, and that should not be, but we should take points raised here very seriously. A lot of work has been done by the Parliamentary staff of the Hansard in getting all those good ideas on paper. If we get them out and compile them together and have the policies and see all the brainstorming that come out from the experiences of the academics and from all of us, we can get good ideas to be put forward as government policy for this nation. That is how I see it, Mr Speaker, but sometimes we do not take that seriously. We think being a Parliament Members is just to come in to

make a big noise so that those who voted me in here can hear my voice. No, we are here to share our ideas and all those things for the betterment future of the nation of Solomon Islands for our people and for their future development. So it has to be considered serious.

I have not seen it here yet since I came into this House all the points that have been raised by the Members of Parliament being brought forward in here so that we can repeat and see the good ideas that come into Parliament, the legislative body which our Constitution enabled us to do so under section 59. Those are some of the things.

We have to see that so as to strengthen the future because we will not be here forever, but we are here temporarily so that those who come in after us will have the ideas and therefore do not need to repeat themselves.

Sir, here in this House we continue and consistently repeating ourselves in Parliament. Like myself I always mention 'copra' but you know those are the things.

Sir, the other point I wish to mention here today is the Ministry of Agriculture, and I will go for copra because I believe it is practical and people right now, my people, our second vessel has returned for loading again as that is the only source people get their revenue from. I believe if we must strengthen the agriculture sectors.

Mr Speaker, if we want our communities to work hard we have to motivate them. In other words, we have to give them incentives for their sweat. They have to earn from their sweat. All of us in this House know very well that when we become a leader or become a father, our people are expecting us to deliver services to their rural villages. I believe if agriculture is strengthened, and I will give an example on copra as that is currently highly produced by people in my constituency. The agriculture budget that has been approved, the government should see that for a dollar we get from our product when we come to see the product at the market and we earn a dollar, the agriculture should give an additional dollar on what we earn from our products. That is a kind of motivating factor to our people. Therefore, the more they produce from their hard work, the more money they will earn from the government. In that way, it is not a free handout but the people have to do their part.

Mr Speaker, I had a good experience now in my constituency. Before I gave them a dollar for the copra, they have to produce two copra bags free. Earning a dollar and whatever money is put on top of that so that there is partnership and participating together in the development of changing the face of the economy.

Mr Speaker, it has been 30 years now and our people are still looking forward expecting that more money will go to them. May be we are encouraging them or may be they have the cargo cult mind. Sometimes the RCDF is just like that. It becomes a cargo cult because they expect more from us. But if we can strengthen them by making them involved and become partners in whatever development they are good at or whatever resources they have, I believe we can motivate so that they can earn more from their hard work. That is how I see it.

On my observation of the meeting, I would like to say here as one of the second termers in Parliament, I can see that Members are growing up and becoming mature. I would like to thank the Leader of the Opposition and his group. I think this is what it is

all about so that we can be able to be strengthened so that we can say the right things because it is a body incorporated that all of us must tell the truth so that others can benefit, and the beneficiaries would be Solomon Islands as a whole.

I would like to thank the government of the day on what is going on now in Parliament House. I am sure we will improve more as we go along, there are more qualified staff in here helping Members of Parliament, and so those are big improvements, Mr Speaker. I thank you for that and commend your staff for their hard work in supporting those improvements.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank the Bills Committee. I think there are more bills coming in, and those bills that have come so far, I think after being assented to by the Governor General must be implemented after they are gazetted. It should be a credit to the government of the day. Sometimes we pass bills but were never assented to by the Governor General and never gazetted and that is why the Bills were never implemented according to government policies. I think after passing of bills we should continue to follow them up so that they can be implemented and become laws of Solomon Islands. That is my observation of this.

I would like now to say something about my people. At this very time some in my constituency are celebrating their birthdays and I would like to especially congratulate the Malai Chiefs, communities and the surrounding villages on this very important time. Purposely we are here to be in Parliament. I should be there, but I just want to wish them a blessing and a wonderful celebration on this very, very important occasion. I believe the message of the chiefs who are there is a message of peace. There is none other for this nation. We can build up the economy, build bridges but if there is no peace then there is no economy. We have to have peace first before we can change the face of Solomon Islands.

Mr Speaker, whilst I now have the opportunity, I would like to thank donor partners as well. They have done a lot for our nation. But I believe, Mr Speaker, we leaders of Solomon Islands must be role models to our fellow citizens of Solomon Islands to accept and to be a partner of our donor partners. I believe all of us cannot deny those things. They give all their taxpayers' money to rebuild this nation.

Sir, this nation went down to the very bottom of the turmoil of hardship. But we thank the Almighty when we came out of it. I believe all the leaders who are here and the bills we have passed, we will bring prosperity to beautiful Solomon Islands to come back to normalcy. I thank the successive government for all their hard work and efforts. Without those decisions probably we would not have been in this House.

Sir, one of the things that I would like to mention again here is leadership. We have come a long way but we have to be serious in protecting the leadership of Solomon Islands. We have been mandated to be in here because of the respect we have received from our fellow supporters. If you see their culture, Mr Speaker, our people in the villages cannot go against our chiefs and elders in the village. But the democratic process of leadership is different. We can say what we want to say about them. Sometimes their names are publicly spoilt and tarnished.

These things happen because of our Constitution, democratic process, freedom of expression, freedom of speech under Chapter 2 of the Constitution. We do things the way we like. But those are the things I think probably we have to understand better the Constitution, the supreme law of Solomon Islands. We must try to ensure that it fits in with our culture, so that the law will give us peace to continue to reign for the betterment of Solomon Islands. It is very important.

We are here governing our country. It is good that we take advices, listen to our fellow neighbors, but at the same time we must come back to see which avenues of our culture can be constituted. It will take time, but I believe with the all the professional lawyers that we have, the AG's office in reviewing the Constitution I think probably we can make it more meaningful, so that it is tailored for our society of Solomon Islands.

Sir, I think that is all I want to say and I would like to say to my people in my constituency, please the way forward is to be partners in development. We must work hard, and they are doing well now, Mr Speaker. I can assure the House that my people are working hard, and I believe that is all we want from all Solomon Islanders. We can say as much as we want to say in here but the people out there in the rural areas are listening and expecting what services we will deliver to them so that they can benefit and enjoy an improved standard of living and livelihood. That is what they are expecting. They are not looking forward to any other expectations but that, Mr Speaker. These are the poor people in the village with their families who are enjoying their evenings right now. All they want is delivery of services from each one of us Members of Parliament and government as a whole.

So I thank the government of the day, the CNURA for a lot of good policies it is employing. As we are now close to the end of the year, I would like to say thank you, and the only way forward for this government is to come up with more policies that will suit the needs of our people so that they can benefit more.

We can still do more but we are only talking about money and not about resources. Money should not come first in our discussions but resources. You turn the tangible resources into cash before it becomes a reality. Money cannot just fall out of thin air. We have to sell copra, we have to sell fish, we have to sell timber, and we have to sell all those things before we can see the actual hard cash. So when we talk about anything here we have to go back to the resources.

The question before I sit down, Mr Speaker, is how can we improve utilizing all the resources provided by the Almighty Creator so that we can use the wisdom and bring forth the wealth as the scripture says, 'Remember I am the Lord your God who gives you the ability to produce wealth'.

I would like to thank you, Mr Speaker, for your tireless effort in manning the House. I also thank the Deputy Speaker, the Clerk and staff for the job well done. I think all of us know that this is longest meeting ever of about five to six weeks. This is the longest time I ever experienced for Parliament to sit. Thank you.

I wish you all Members of Parliament a good health and I believe whatever we say here are for the same common goal, and that is for the betterment of Solomon

Islands. All the ideas we shared are things we have to look forward in carrying on since we are one family working together for the good of Solomon Islands.

To our Churches, thank you for your prayers. Without your unceasing prayers, we would not see changes in our nation. With those few remarks, I support this motion.

Hon. Sikua: Mr Speaker, I sincerely thank all Members of Parliament from both sides of the House who have contributed and participated in debating this motion. I wish in particular to thank all government Ministers and all Backbenchers who have taken the floor to elaborate on some of the issues I raised including the programs undertaken by their respective Ministries as well as their responses to remarks made by the other side of the House, in particular the honorable Leader of Opposition.

Mr Speaker, I do not intend to repeat what my Ministers and Backbenchers have said in terms of their respective ministries and the government as a whole, as I am confident they will continue to take charge of the responsibilities given to them as Ministers of the Crown and continue to support the government in its genuine endeavors of serving the people of this beautiful country.

Mr Speaker, the distinguished Leader of the Opposition is a very enthusiastic speaker, and I and my Ministers have taken note of the various comments and remarks he made including other Members of the other side of the House in their contributions to their debate on this motion Mr Speaker. I want to assure the honorable Leader of the Opposition and Members on the other side of the House of the genuine efforts that my government is making to take this country forward and for which we will need their support and cooperation throughout.

I know that the honorable Leader of Opposition and other Members have raised a lot of issues but because of time constraints, I think we may have to leave the debate on those substantive issues in detail for later, may be as a private Members' motion or private Members' bills.

Mr Speaker, the honourable Leader of Opposition has challenged the government to work around the clock, and I also want say that is exactly what we are going to do. And in all fairness, Mr Speaker, I believe that any judgment on the performance of CNURA should be made about this time next year as December this year will be a bit too early. And so my statements in the motion I moved on Monday morning remain as I expressed them and they will go down in history and history will judge all of us.

Mr Speaker, I urge the Opposition Leader and Members of the other side of the House to read them carefully because I believe they themselves as well as those of us on this side of the House, all believe in democracy and good governance, sensible politics and mutual respect. This is a government by the majority, and so I urge all of us Members of Parliament to lead as our people would want us to, and this is the Parliament of the people of Solomon Islands.

Mr Speaker, above all, let me state again that this has been a fruitful and successful meeting of Parliament contrary to what others think. We have been able to deliberate on and pass a number of important bills, despite the drafting delays we

experienced. We could have continued with the 2008 Civil Aviation Bill 2008, but as responsible legislators we need to give enough time for the Bills Committee to scrutinize the Bill before it is put to the Second Reading and the rest of the parliamentary process. And so we should not rush such important pieces of legislation and we will therefore continue our deliberation on this bill in the November sitting of Parliament. Mr Speaker, I thank the honorable Leader of Opposition for his understanding on this matter.

Mr Speaker, a couple of reports were also tabled and debated during the sitting and I hope more of such reports will be tabled and debated in our next sitting. In addition to a number of bills including the 2009 Appropriation Bill 2009 that the government will bring, preparations for the 2009 Appropriation Bill are now well underway.

Mr Speaker, yesterday we did the right thing by having a motion in Parliament moved to congratulate, encourage and wish our young Futsal Team all the best in the FIFA Futsal Tournament in Brazil. I am sure we are all proud of our boys as they represent not only Solomon Islands but also the Oceania region. In this connection, Mr Speaker, I encourage all our youths to be involved in activities that will uplift our families, our communities and our country as a whole.

Solomon Islanders are usually said to be reserved and quiet compared to others in the region. Sir, we need to build the activities that will up lift our families, our communities and our country as a whole. Solomon Islanders are usually said to be reserved and quite Mr Speaker, compared to others in the region Mr Speaker. We need to build the self esteem of our young people so that they become confident, honest and aspiring citizens. We need to be a bit more patriotic and to be proud of our country Solomon Islands, while simultaneously respecting other nationals of other countries.

Mr Speaker, the CNURA Government remains firmly committed to working closely with all stakeholders including our development partners, RAMSI, churches and the civil society to move this country forward. I am pleased with the increasing level of support and goodwill that our development partners have demonstrated so far since my government came into office. We have to capitalize on the positive relations we now enjoy with our friends and seize the opportunity to help our country progress and develop.

Finally, Mr Speaker, I wish to remind our people to take the lead or initiative in helping our communities to improve their livelihoods. Much all, any assistance from others, Mr Speaker, there are things that we can do our own without much or any assistances from others. Mr Speaker, we need to instill and cultivate in our people a culture of enterprise and honest hard work.

Equally important, Mr Speaker, and consistent with our number one priority of reconciliation and rehabilitation, is the need for us to cultivate a culture of peace, tolerance and respect for each other. This is the basis for sustainable peace and harmony in a culturally diverse society and country like ours.

With these remarks, Mr Speaker, I once again thank all Members of Parliament for their contribution to this motion, as well as to the rest of the government business

that we have covered during the course of this meeting. Mr Speaker, I also wish to register once again my sincere gratitude to your good self, the Deputy Speaker, the Clerk and your staff for the excellent manner in which you presided over our meeting. I hope that following parliament adjournment today, Members of Parliament will now find time to attend to important constituency business, to visit their constituencies and their people and that Ministers continue to keep working on equally important government programs and projects.

Mr Speaker, may I also take this opportunity to thank my good people of North East Guadalcanal constituency for their continuous support and cooperation. Let me assure them that I will continue to work closely with them for the good of the constituency and the country as a whole.

With these remarks Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

The motion is passed

Mr Speaker: As the Honourable Prime Minister has alluded to earlier it now falls on me to adjourn Parliament. But Honourable Members before I put the question for the adjournment of Parliament or this sitting, I wish to take this opportunity to make a few remarks about this meeting and to reciprocate all the words that have been directed at the Chair and staff of Parliament.

Honorable Members, today marks the end of the 8th meeting of this Parliament. It has indeed been a very long meeting, lasting almost six weeks from its commencement on 24 July 2008.

Honourable Members may recall that at the conclusion of the last meeting, I made the following observation: "... 2008 has indeed started off on a good note and bodes well for Parliament. Let us look forward to a productive and cooperative year". Months on, we can all say with confidence and great satisfaction that the Meeting that is concluding today has, on the whole, been indicative of the cooperation and productivity that we envisaged earlier this year.

In this Meeting, Parliament continued to improve and quite often excel in carrying out its constitutional functions while at the same time introducing certain procedural mechanisms and initiatives that bear the hallmark of a Parliament growing in maturity and fast-developing parliamentarians.

Before I continue, on behalf of the House and Members, I wish to also express my sadness over the passing away of the late Augustine Fatai, who was a very active and significant officer of the Public Accounts Committee. We remember his priceless contribution to the revival of the Audit Office and the PAC in recent years and his tireless work in ensuring that this Parliament fulfils its constitutional function of scrutinizing the executive's expenditure of public funds through the PAC. We extend our condolence and prayers of support to the family of the late Fatai and wish them comfort in these sad times.

On the same token, I also wish to thank the Acting Auditor-General and his staff for taking up the responsibilities and for continuing to assist the PAC with the same high standards that the late Fatai has set prior to his untimely death.

Honorable Members, on a happier note, I wish to acknowledge the presence and work of Mr. John Evans, former Clerk of the NSW Parliament, who is currently in the country. Mr. Evans, as most of you know, is currently working on the review of our Standing Orders. He arrived 2 weeks ago and has been working with the Parliamentary Secretariat in finalizing the draft new Standing Orders that will be forwarded to the Speaker, the House Committee and then Members for their consideration. We thank Mr. Evans for his hard work and also for his evidence before the Special Select Committee on Privileges and look forward to his continued assistance on the Standing Orders review.

This meeting also will hold historical value because of the visit by their Royal Highnesses, the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester on 5 August 2008. I was very pleased that procedurally and in terms of protocol, this House welcomed their Royal Highnesses with grace and appropriateness and I certainly hope that we showed how far we have progressed since Independence to their Royal Highnesses.

The House was given the opportunity to review the International Assistance Notice and RAMSI and the House by resolution referred that review to the Foreign Relations Committee. I am informed that the Committee is well underway in its preparatory work for the review and is taking every step to seek stakeholder and community views on its terms of reference. To assist this process, Honourable Members have received in their pigeonholes 5 packages from the Foreign Relations Committee. These envelopes contain materials on the Committee's inquiry into the Facilitation of International Assistance Notice 2003 (FIA Notice). The Committee would like Honorable Members to assist the Committee in delivering these packages to their communities. The Committee would further like to encourage Honorable Members to assist and support their communities provide their views in writing to the Foreign Relations Committee in time for the closing date for submissions.

As we all know this is a very important matter referred by Parliament to the Committee. I would like all of you to assist the Parliament and the Committee to engage with your communities in everyway possible so that the Committee would be able to reach out to and accommodate the views of our communities.

Perhaps at this juncture, it is appropriate that I remind Members of this Parliament's Corporate Plan 2008 – 2012 which was tabled today. This Plan sets out the improvements that the National Parliament Office will implement to improve services to Members and Parliament's productivity. I urge Members to read the Corporate Plan and come prepared in the next meeting to discuss it in the House.

I now wish to reflect on certain procedural matters that arose during this meeting. I observed with satisfaction that in this meeting, there was an increase in the use of questions to scrutinize the executive while keeping our people informed of important issues; an improvement in use of amendment mechanisms in the *Standing Orders* regarding bills; the strategic use of special adjournment motions through which

Parliament can be adjourned to a specific date; and the use, for the first time, of congratulatory motions – that relating to our young National Futsal Team.

Those are some of my specific observations on this meeting and I am grateful that most Members undertook their duties robustly and with commitment. I remind Members that their attendance is tightly monitored in the House, on television and by the press gallery and commend them to advise the House of any absences that will be noted. I also applaud all Members for maintaining civil, constructive and robust debates as well as smooth-running consideration of bills in the Committee of the Whole. As I have said earlier, we are improving with each meeting and it is very satisfying to note that Members and the House are heading in the direction of maturity.

I also want to sincerely thank my Deputy for his support as well. I have every confidence in the Deputy Speaker and it is comforting to know that if, for whatever reason, the Speaker is unable to preside, there is always someone ready, willing and fully capable to preside. I extend my gratitude to the Clerk, the Deputy Clerk and the Parliamentary Secretariat and the UNDP Parliamentary Strengthening Project Manager and staff, for all their combined efforts and advice which made every sitting procedurally sound and go smoothly. I also thank all other parliamentary officers and staff for your contribution in making this House a friendly environment for this meeting. Appreciation must also be shown for the contribution of Members' wives in beautifying this House with flowers during the meeting. I thank you for the support which, as I understand, is rendered freely.

On behalf of the Clerk and her team, I also wish to thank officials from the Office of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Attorney-General's Chambers, the Office of the Auditor-General and Permanent Secretaries of the Ministries together with their officers. I understand that in this Meeting, there was constant consultation between these officials and the National Parliament Office. Through such cooperation, we were able to correct oversights quickly and with minimal impact, even those that took us by surprise or those that were beyond our control. I thank every officers involved for staying true to our common goal to make this meeting a success.

Finally, I extend my sincere appreciation to members of the public who have been following this meeting with interest. It is indeed a positive sign that our people are taking more notice of Parliament's business as this affects all of us. In that regard, I wish to also express my gratitude to the media, particularly those present in the gallery every sitting day for ensuring that people are informed while increasing Parliament's publicity during the last six weeks. I wish to mention in particular, One News, for its part in televising this meeting for viewers in Honiara and other urban centers.

Before I conclude, I wish to remind all Members of what to expect between now and the next meeting, which will perhaps be held towards the end of the year. This Saturday, RAMSI and the Speaker's Office will co-host the 5th Anniversary of RAMSI's arrival at the Parliament compound. I am also advised by the Parliamentary Secretariat that we will hold our first Parliament Open Day in early October and FPOC conference which was postponed earlier is expected to be held in late October.

Honorable Members, I congratulate everyone on successfully completing a fruitful meeting. I had earlier observed that this year started off well and I believe we should all be proud that we have maintained that standard. I am confident that we will continue down this path and expect that when Parliament next convenes, we will have many success stories to tell and much business to work on.

Thank you and may God bless us all.

The House adjourned sine die at 6.40 pm