

Thursday, 31st May, 2018

Sen. Olekina: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have to admit that you caught me unawares. I was having a discussion with my leader in terms of other legislations that we are introducing into this House such as the Urban Planning Bill that tries to redefine our cities. I thought about it and said, what about our hospitals? This Petition is so timely because it gives us an avenue or opportunity to look at all the hospitals that we have in densely populated cities or towns in this country and ask ourselves; what is it that each referral hospital must have?

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Petition. I know that Uasin Gishu and Eldoret particularly, is a very big town that has a huge population in it. When we are looking at this petition, it will be important for us to examine the existing institution. What is it that it does not have? I concur with my colleague, Sen. Aaron Cheruiyot, when he talked about the resources and what the National Treasury ought to do.

Right now, we are talking about devolution and when we are pushing for more resources to go into the counties, we also have to consider the way we have looked at our hospitals. In Narok County, our hospitals probably are Level Four. It is probably considered as a referral hospital but what are some of the facilities that it has in terms of disease control? We might elevate a hospital and call it a referral hospital yet when you go into the morgue, it does not have the required facilities to support that status.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I support the Petition by Gov. Mandago. I urge that when we are looking at this, we look at the entire health sector. I believe that health is one of the four pillars of H.E President Uhuru Muigai Kenyatta. So, this Petition is really timely because it gives us an opportunity to support all other hospitals in this country.

With those remarks, I beg to support.

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Sen. Olekina: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir, for giving me the two minutes to comment and support this Petition. My leader talked about a black person taking the land of another black person. When I reflect on all the land issues that we have, I come to the conclusion that the full dispensation of land by the British colonial masters set precedent to all the problems that we have in this country regarding land ownership but the people who took over the land from the colonial masters make them look like philanthropists. There are issues surrounding land ownership which include the way people are kicked out of their land like the Maasais and the Talais.

There is a question of leasehold. Most of the land owned by the colonial masters had a lease period of 99 years. What happened? When you commit this to the Committee on Lands, Environment and Natural Resources, those are the questions that they should be asking. When the lease expired, how was it renewed? Were the people who were kicked out of those parcels of land considered? We have a very good Constitution that guarantees everyone a roof but where do you take these people when the land that they were raised and brought up on was taken away from them? All the land issues can only be resolved if we are bold enough.

I commend the President for saying that he will be the first one to fight corruption but the only way we can win this war is when the President decides to implement the TJRC Report tomorrow. I know that the Maasais are complaining. Their land was taken away from them and they were sent away from Laikipia down to the reserve areas. This issue is very important and I want to request the President to consider what I have said.

The Speaker (Hon. Lusaka): I like your passion.

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Sen. Olekina: Madam Temporary Speaker, I rise on a point of order, under Standing Order 100. Is the distinguished Senator in order to go against the Standing Orders? The Standing Orders are very clear that we can only limit the time before the debate starts.

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The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Nyamunga): Very well.

Proceed, Sen. Ledama Olekina.

Sen. Olekina: Thank you, Madam Temporary Speaker. As the Italian mafia would say, all of us in this country are corrupt. We, the politicians, are number one in corruption. If it was a championship, I would probably say that the presidency would be the defending champions. So, the biggest question to ask ourselves is; what is this corruption?

Madam Temporary Speaker, the media is awash with all ideas of what form of corruption ails this country. We were recently entertained by the distinguished Senator for Nandi, Sen. Cherargei, who spoke before me, when he said that in his county, there is a lot of nepotism and sycophancy. He even used the words “slay queens;” saying that the Governor of Nandi County is hiring all these people.

Madam Temporary Speaker, I can tell you this; that we are all corrupt. Let us not kid ourselves. This is something that has been ailing us for a very long time. There is a lot of favoritism everywhere; in our offices we employ our relatives and favour our political sycophants. We do not reward merit! Let us not kid ourselves. The question is; are we really ready and willing to solve this problem? The former Vice President of USA, Joe Biden---

Sen. Wambua: On a point of information, Madam Temporary Speaker.

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Nyamunga): Sen. Olekina, do you need any information?

Sen. Olekina: No, Madam Temporary Speaker; I do not need any information.

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Nyamunga): Proceed.

Sen. Olekina: The former Vice President of the USA, Joe Biden, once said that fighting corruption is not only good governance in itself, it is self-defense and patriotism. This is what we need to be talking about. We need to realise that if God is so kind to us, he will only give us 70 years; we will then die and leave all these earthly possessions in this world.

Madam Temporary Speaker, I am sick and tired of this corruption. It is now becoming a comedy. Every year, the President is heard saying: “Everyone who is corrupt should carry their own cross.” I have been waiting to see someone senior in Government carrying their own cross or actually being prosecuted and found guilty of having embezzled funds. We are not ready as a county to accept the truth. The moment we will accept the truth is when we will begin to have a decent conversation about corruption in this country.

Madam Temporary Speaker, I have lived in the USA for about 20 years and in Kenya for the rest of my years. However, it is only in Kenya that people become overnight millionaires by working for the Government. Every politician who comes to this Parliament – the Senate and the National Assembly – actually spends most of their time seeking government tenders, working with the Government and cutting those deals that the distinguished Senator for Bungoma County was talking about. We are teaching our children that the only way you can be respected is by cutting deals. That is the reason why you can see those university students in cybercafes discussing about deals. It is because we are leading by example.

Madam Temporary Speaker, today I listened carefully to the story that the former Prime Minister gave; and I stand corrected on this. He said that we are saying that we are fighting corruption, but the people we are arresting are those junior officers. It is like taking a dog for hunting, but you do not guide it; and you let it get into the bush. That way, the dog could come out with a squirrel or a rat. However, when a leopard comes, it runs away.

The truth is that if we are serious about fighting this corruption, then we must guide the dog that we take hunting to ensure that even if it is a leopard, it is dealt with. If you go to the Maasai Mara National Reserve, you will see real dogs which are trained to fight lions because they are guided. The only way we will end corruption in this country is if we first take personal responsibility, and that is what we are not ready to do.

Madam Temporary Speaker, how do we solve this corruption problem? One, we must build capacities. Our county governments are rotting in corruption because – like the distinguished Senator for Homa Bay County said – sometimes, when you lack the capacity to develop legislation that will help you to do your job, there is no way that you will achieve what you desire to achieve.

The problem we have in this country is that the government and we, the politicians, are not ready to empower our people by giving them the tools that they can use to fight corruption. If we are ready to fight corruption, let us develop these tools and cut the red tape. The only way you can be given a contract is if you know somebody. That is very frustrating. The reason we have many pending Bills, some of which cannot even be authenticated, is because of corruption. It is sad.

Madam Temporary Speaker, the distinguished Senator for Machakos County almost cried. I am upset and angry, and every Kenyan ought to be angry because we are not going anywhere. We have so many youth who are unemployed, but instead of those coming up with ideas on how to make them employed, we are busy cutting deals with even foreigners. When you travel around this country, you will see that any business that is coming up is managed by foreigners. Why is this so? It is because we are blindfolded. We are so corrupt that we cannot see opportunities.

All high-end restaurants in this country are now run by foreigners and we, politicians, are partners. When will we teach our youth that they can make a decent living by using the opportunities which are around? The reason Dr. Matiang'i is taking action now is not because he does not want to open our country for direct foreign investment. It is because he wants us to be upset and see those opportunities.

We have to end impunity. We will end corruption the day we will say that it does not matter who you are, who your godfather is or where you come from; so long as you have committed a crime, you face the full wrath of the law. Otherwise, we will talk about corruption yearly. This is nothing but systemic corruption. We have weakened all our institutions. We do not give them independence. Even in this Parliament, I dare say that most of the legislations that come from the Government are designed to create Authorities to embezzle funds.

(The red light was switched on)

Madam Temporary Speaker, I request for one more minute, please.

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Nyamunga): Just one minute, please.

Sen. Olekina: Madam Temporary Speaker, if you look at the quality of legislation that we are drafting in this Parliament, they are designed to establish authorities to create Chief Executive Officers (CEOs). We forget about devolution.

Recently in the House, we killed the Irrigation Bill. I have seen it in the Order Paper after coming back from the National Assembly. The reason we killed it is because we did not agree with the way it was drafted. Now, it is finding its way back. What do we call that? It is corruption! It is coming to a point where we are almost accepting it as a national culture; that if you are not corrupt, you are not Kenyan. We need to have the conversation that we are talking about, but be ready to take personal responsibility. We should be ready to say: "I will reward so and so because of merit and not because he or she comes from my home." That is the reason we are not developing in this country.

I support the President and encourage him. Let me say something here that, probably, even my leader would not expect me to say. If His Excellency President Uhuru Muigai Kenyatta really goes the whole nine yards and fights corruption, I will be among the first people to go down and beg him to run again for presidency. However, right now, we will just be entertained; it is becoming comical. Let us practice what we preach and not just preach.

Madam Temporary Speaker, with those few remarks, I beg to support.