

# PARLIAMENT OF KENYA

## THE SENATE

## THE HANSARD

Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> April 2020

*The House met at the Senate Chamber,  
Parliament Buildings, at 2.30 p.m.*

*[The Speaker (Hon. Lusaka) in the Chair]*

### PRAYER

**The Speaker** (Hon. Lusaka): What is your point of order, Sen. Olekina?

**Sen. Olekina:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, Sir. I was listening to my colleague trying to question why the Chairperson of the Committee of Health brought this Statement and why he should not be telling us what he should do. I think this is a House where we put our minds together to be able to determine---

**The Speaker** (Hon. Lusaka): What is your point of order?

**Sen. Olekina:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I think Sen. Kinyua is completely out of order to question why the Chairperson brought the matter to this House, yet it is his Committee which is dealing with this matter. When he brings it to this House, it gives us an opportunity to share ideas on how we can help these Kenyans.

Therefore, I know for a fact that in the 'Lower House', there are two Members of Parliament who have been dealing with this issue to amend the Public Health Act. I know the MP for Nyali Constituency, Hon. Mohammed and Hon. Okemo have been pushing for this. I do not see if there is anything wrong with the Chair.

**Sen. Olekina:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir. First, I want to thank the Senate Majority Leader for bringing in this Statement. I truly empathize with the people of Elgeyo-Marakwet and West Pokot because of the challenges--- *Hii kitu haisikii bwana.*

*(Sen. Olekina removed his mask)*

**The Speaker** (Hon. Lusaka): You are out of order! Can you wear your mask?

**Sen. Olekina:** I am doing it.

*(Laughter)*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I empathize---

*(Loud consultations)*

**The Speaker** (Hon. Lusaka): Senator, you may need to shave your hair so that it facilitates your---

*(Laughter)*

Okay, proceed.

**Sen. Olekina:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, ---

**Sen. Sakaja:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, Sir, even as I interrupt my good friend, Sen. Olekina, when you gave guidelines, I think that you should have specified the type of masks because this is a dustpan mask for sleeping---

*(Laughter)*

That is why he cannot express himself. Maybe, you should specify which type of masks hon. Members should wear. Otherwise, people will come with all manner of contractions.

**Sen. Wambua:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, Sir. I plead with the Chair to require the Serjeant-at-Arms to provide Sen. Olekina with the right mask.

**The Speaker** (Hon. Lusaka): I think that the Serjeant-at-Arms have been providing masks. Let us stick to masks that are friendly.

**Sen. Olekina:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I will try. I am feeling so sorry for the people of Elgeyo-Marakwet that I got so emotional because this happens all the time. I think that instead of waiting for us to ask ourselves what the Government can do, it is about time we started engaging these institutions so that we can prevent this from happening. When it happens, we can support our constituents.

When I saw the Senate Majority Leader fly there, I imagined a time in Narok when floods would take everyone and there would be nothing for us to do.

There was another Statement raised by Sen. (Dr.) Mbiti about dead bodies detained in hospitals because family members of the deceased could not pay bills. We need to ask ourselves whether there are measures that this House can immediately take to support these people.

Some people will die in hospitals and their bodies detained because their next of kin might not pay bills. Hospitals are in business. They are there to make profits. In this case, I suggest that some of the money for COVID-19 be allocated to alleviate the suffering of these people. This is because if people are unable to maintain social distance, they may end up contracting this disease.

I encourage the Senate Majority Leader to reach out to us in person so that we can assist. This is the time when we should all give and find a way to help our brothers.

The most important thing is to plant trees so that we can save the environment and ensure that tomorrow when there is a landslide, the trees will hold the soil from moving.

**Sen. Olekina:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir. I will quickly go to the point. First, I commend the Committee for doing such a wonderful job. The recommendations are quite large. I wonder when they will all be implemented.

I want to comment on the economic aspect. One which is critical is on the cash transfer to the elders. We realized that yesterday, there were text messages which were sent out that people are receiving Kshs8,000. I wonder when the pastoralist's communities would receive this money.

I request the Committee to find a way to trickle this down to the chiefs, ward administrators and Members of County Assemblies (MCAs) for them to assist in identifying all the elders that are supposed to benefit.

We just received a 411 that says that COVID-19 Fund has raised Kshs1.2 billion, including Kshs10 million from media houses as part of the contribution.

I will emphasize the issue of transparency. It is important for us to understand how this money will be spent. When we ask these questions, nobody wants to give us the answer. We have seen different counties coming up with different plans. It is important for these counties to be coordinated. Someone asked yesterday, how comes Machakos County is able to set up these hospitals in the stadium and other counties are not able to?

As a Senate, we need to know how this money is appropriated. This is the House that will deal with the division of revenue so that all counties can have a concerted effort.

Finally, a county like Narok has local and international borders. I understand that tomorrow, the Committee will be meeting with the Cabinet Secretary for Interior and Coordination of National Government, Dr. Matiang'i. It is important for us to understand how they are stopping the movement in international borders, for example, in Olpusimoru in Narok County where traders are coming in.

We have seen that numbers in Tanzania are going up. So, it is important that not only local borders are protected, but also international borders which no one is talking about.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I commend the Committee for the good work it has done.

I wish that the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) will find a way to work with local industries. For example, Keroche Breweries is a company that has been beaten up. There are many other local companies. There are recommendations of people waiving rent---

**The Speaker** (Hon. Lusaka): Your time is up. Proceed, Sen. Omogeni.

Sen. (Dr.) Musuruve, I am sorry. We will have to adjourn in the next three minutes.

**Sen. Omogeni:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, as a Member of the Committee, I was given a task of saying something about The Pandemic Response and Management Bill. However, time will not allow. So, I will do that next time.

I want to respond to the issue that has been raised by, my good friend, Senator for Narok County. We had a meeting yesterday with the CS for Labour, Social Security and Services. He informed us that the short message (SMS) that is sent to our senior citizens about Kshs8,000 is a backlog of Kshs2,000 that is due to be paid to the elderly citizens every two months.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, we raised the issue of the danger that our senior citizens are exposed to of being told to go banks where there is a lot of crowding. In fact, I raised a concern about what happened in Nyamira and Keroka yesterday where people were rained on. They were told to wait outside as they were called one by one to receive the money. We agreed with the CS that going forward, they should be paying these citizens using the alphabetical order. For example, those whose names begin with A-B, on

Monday and C-D on Tuesday, so that we do not have a situation of over-crowding in the banks

We also agreed that the registration of senior citizens happened two years ago. So, there is need to do another campaign for fresh registration. He promised that in July of the next financial year, we should re-line our senior citizens for fresh registration so that more people are beneficiaries.

On the issue of involvement of chiefs and MCAs, the CS informed us that the last time they tried to involve chiefs, they were deducting money that was due to our citizens. Where a person is supposed to be paid Kshs2000, they were paying them Kshs1500 after deducting Kshs500.

So, he informed us that there is no other form of payment that they can use for now other than banks. However, we proposed that going forward, they should use M-Pesa as way of payment so that we do not create a situation where people queue in banks.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, my time is over. I hope that next time, I will get more time.  
I reply.

*(Question put and agreed to)*

### ADJOURNMENT

**The Speaker** (Hon. Lusaka): Hon. Senators, it is now 5.30 p.m., time to interrupt the business of the Senate. The House, therefore, stands adjourned until Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> April, 2020 at 2.30 p.m.

The Senate rose at 5.30 p.m.