

**Votes and Proceedings
of the
Eighteenth Parliament**

No. 26

**First Sitting of the Fifteenth Parliament
Tuesday 13th October 2009**

1. The House met at 10.00am in accordance with the resolution made on 15th September 2009.
2. Hon Riddell Akua, M.P. Speaker of Parliament, took the Chair and read Prayers.
3. **Statement from the Chair**

Hon Speaker made the following statement to the House relating to his recent trip to Tanzania, as follows:-

‘Honourable Members, CPA can work marvellous for Nauru if only there’s continual representation and more additional active involvement. Turning up to the plenary meeting once a year, in my opinion, would not wholly compliment the importance of the many reasons on being a member of the organisation. CPA can provide additional aid with their already existing projects.

We, as a member, aren’t accessing these projects through our lack of awareness of what are available, but this could be remedied by attending smaller meetings held throughout the year.

It need not be for us to attend all the CPA small conferences, it would undermine the value of our membership due to heavy travel costs, however some of these meetings incorporates projects and there is a definite need for us to access them so as to compliment our membership. I recommend for us to attend some conferences that are appropriate for Nauru, whether for sustainable growth or other matters relating thereto. It would require us to undertake preliminary ground work so we could ascertain what projects are on offer and of which are appropriate.

In the CPA plenary that I recently attended, I was astonished to learn that Kiribati, Tuvalu and Vanuatu have funding grants from the World Bank Institute, lending support to projects gained from the CPA. These countries are frequent attendees to CPA small conferences held through the calendar year.

I would also like to add that there is need for additional attendees other than the current practice of sending 2 Members, perhaps we could delegate from other government departments rather than coming from Parliament only. We need to widen our scope so that we could take advantage of what CPA has to offer. After all CPA has

wide and various ongoing assistance projects that I believe others can benefit including Parliament.

Our current representations are with only 2 conferences. First is with the President Officers & Clerks meeting. This conference on a national level gain is by assessing the CPA grant for \$20K which I have outlined in my earlier statements in the House detailing the use of these funds. With the CPA main plenary, I have nothing to report in terms of national gains for in this conference, from earlier meetings deals with proposed recommendations for approval or refuting. Although sadly, I would often sit in for other Pacific nations voting with no clear picture in terms of gains for our country. I often vote following other Pacific nations' lead with the general overall picture as the incentive for casting my vote.

Currently on-island is Miss Margaret Cazabon lending her expertise in our Parliament to set up a website. Miss Cazabon hails from Canberra and she is part of the network which lends expert assistance or other arrangements with CPA member countries. I would like all to give their support to her so she could complete her work with the finesse that we would all like to see.

Your Parliament has engaged the 2 employees in the Parliamentary Counsel Office and a PAC Secretary. Details of their travels are with my staff and I thank all those who gave interviews to these successful applicants that culminated in their final engagement. It is worthy of mention that our Parliamentary Counsel, for her ever diligent work was enabled in the engagement of these two persons despite her huge commitments with other parliamentary related work and despite being very physically heavy as well.

I shall be sending 2 letters to the Speaker of Samoa and the Speaker of the Kingdom of Tonga expressing our sadness in relation with the devastating Tsunami that hit their countries just so recently.

Finally, but not the least, during our return trip from Tanzania we were kindly given courtesy assistance during our transit stopover in Singapore which was a wait of 52 hours, by a good gentleman by the name of G.S. Gupta. My immense thanks to the family and his two sons, Ashok and Amit, for they provided the leg work in taking care of use for the 2 and half days, which lessened the onerous burden of travel. The total leg of our destination, Tanzania and return, took 3 days on the forward travel and again another 4 days on the return. My humble gratitude to this family. I am sure that Members are aware that the name Gupta is synonymous with our phosphate industry and may we keep this relationship ongoing. Honourable Members, I submit.'

Hon Baron Waqa (Boe) moved that the statement be noted.

4. Notice of Motion

Hon Kieren Keke (Minister for Finance) gave notice that at the next sitting of Parliament, he shall move to present the Republic of Nauru Finance Corporation (Repeal) Bill 2009.

5. Questions on Notice

Question No 16 was deferred to the next sitting as the Minister in charge of the question, is away overseas.

Question No 17 was replied to.

Due to technical problems in recording and televising the sitting, the Chair suspended the sitting and to resume when then bell rings.

6. Questions Without Notice were asked

7. Ministerial Statement and Tabling of Papers

(a) His Excellency the President gave his Report on the 64th Session of the United Nations General Assembly and other Meetings as follows:-

‘Mr. Speaker, having just returned to Nauru last week from a business trip, I now have the pleasure to provide this august House with a brief report of my undertakings on that trip.

The main purpose of my trip, Mr. Speaker, was to attend the 64th Annual Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York. For the second consecutive year as President of Nauru, I was proud to deliver my national statement before the General Assembly on the 25th of September.

In my address to the United Nations I spoke of the many challenges and constraints facing our island home of Nauru. This includes the current global economic crisis; the recent spike in fuel and energy prices; the adverse impacts on climate change; as well as the small size of our economy and our remoteness from world markets resulting in high transportation costs making goods and commodities such as rice very expensive. I also highlighted that despite these challenges Nauru has improved its situation financially compared to past years, so much so that the Pacific Regional Assistance to Nauru has been withdrawn as it is no longer needed.

I also called on the United Nations to establish their presence on the ground in Nauru and urged them to pay greater attention to the needs of the Pacific region as a whole. I stressed that the challenges of this millennium can only be overcome through multilateral co-operation and a revitalised UN system.

Mr. Speaker, I also argued for Taiwan’s meaningful participation in the UN agencies, including the climate change summits. Taiwan is after all one of the world’s twenties largest economies and has much to offer both developed and developing countries.

Mr. Speaker, there were many other issues raised in my debate at the UN General Assembly and I have attached a copy of my full statement for Members' information and ease of reference.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to advise all Members of this House that I also attended several other important meetings at the margins of the UNGA. The first meeting I participated in was the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) Leaders Summit which was followed the next day by the UN High Level Summit on Climate Change.

Both of these meetings focused on issues relating to climate change and all participants strongly agreed that there is a clear and urgent need for all countries – both developed and developing, to co-operate and strengthen their efforts to reduce carbon emissions in order to ensure the continuing survival of our planet. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, there is irrefutable scientific evidence that clearly proves that climate change poses the biggest threat to our security, our sovereignty and our very own existence. This particularly true for the Pacific region and small island states including Nauru. If we do not act now, we face the grave reality of relocating to higher grounds within this century.

For Members' information there will be a meeting in Copenhagen in December where leaders will agree to a new protocol to replace the Kyoto Protocol which expires in 2012. I have every intention of attending this important meeting, and in fact, all of the leaders of the region have made a commitment to be in Copenhagen come December. Our presence is required as whatever decision arises from this meeting will likely have significant impacts on our future livelihoods and the region as a whole.

Mr. Speaker, Members may recall from earlier reports to this House that Nauru is currently the chair of Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) in New York. Hence, apart from representing Nauru at the AOSIS Leaders Summit and the UN High Level Summit on Climate Change, I also had the equally distinctive honour of representing PSIDS as the current chair and addressing these meetings on their behalf. My statements as PSIDS Chair are also attached herein for Members' information.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that I also attended the very first meeting between the US Secretary of State and the Pacific Islands Leaders in New York. Again, as Chair of PSIDS I had the high honour of delivering a statement at this meeting on behalf of all the Pacific island countries. My speech was well-received by the Secretary of State, Mrs. Hilary Clinton and her delegation. In reciprocation, the Secretary of State assured the Pacific leaders that though this was the first such meeting, it most certainly would not be the last.

Mr. Speaker, this represents a very significant and positive change in the relations between the Pacific island countries and the United States of America. For many years our respective governments have lobbied vigorously for greater commitments from the United States through bilateral channels and also through our Ambassadors in New York. It is only now, with the induction of President Obama into office, that the leaders of the Pacific have been given the opportunity to be heard. This is indeed a most welcome development and I look forward to stronger co-operation with the US under the Obama administration.

Mr. Speaker, I also had the pleasure of hosting a cocktail reception in my capacity as PSIDS Chair which I might add was a very successful event and was well-attended by Presidents, Prime Ministers and other high level dignitaries from many parts of the world. You may be interested to know that past receptions hosted by other PSIDS countries have never enjoyed such good attendance. Hence, the presence of so many distinguished leaders and high level delegates at my reception was a firm indication of the mutual respect and the close diplomatic relations that is currently being enjoyed between Nauru and its bilateral partners and friends.

Mr. Speaker, I am further pleased to inform Members of this House that I also had the opportunity to hold some bilateral meetings while in New York. In this respect, I met with the AJC or American Jewish Community to discuss possible areas of co-operation and assistance. I am also happy to confirm from our discussions that the AJC will be funding Nauru's first ever State Visit to Israel which will take place in January next year. This State Visit will no doubt allow me and government to follow on some of the important issues and areas of co-operation that have been discussed.

On behalf of Cabinet I also personally met with an Israeli candidate for the post of Honorary Consul in Israel. After speaking with him at length I am pleased to report that this man, Mr. David Ben Basat, is most suitably qualified for the position and I will be recommending to Cabinet to formally appoint him. Mr. Basat's appointment will not only strengthen our bilateral relations with the Israeli government but will also serve to advance trade and other co-operative opportunities and people-to-people exchanges between the citizens of Nauru and Israel.

Mr. Speaker and Honourable Members, although this is only an abbreviated version of events undertaken in New York I am nonetheless sure that you will agree that my stay there was altogether a very busy and eventful one. Personally speaking, I found the experience to be immensely rewarding and believe that it assisted in raising our national profile and drawing the international community's attention to Nauru's immediate priorities and continuing development challenges.

In conclusion Mr. Speaker, it would be remiss of me if I failed to acknowledge and commend the excellent work of Ms. Marlene Moses our permanent representative to the United Nations. Ambassador Moses is highly regarded by her colleagues in New York and rightly so. It is largely through her tireless and dedicated efforts that my trip was such a resounding success. I take this opportunity to place on record my personal congratulations and utmost appreciation to Ambassador Moses for a job well done.

Before I resume my seat, I wish to thank Members for their patience and unwavering attention.'

(b) Hon Kieren Keke, (Minister for Finance) made the following statement on the Department of Finance, First Quarter Activities, as follows:-

'Mr. Speaker and Honourable Colleagues, today I rise to make a statement to the Parliament about the activities and achievements of the Department of Finance, for the first quarter of the current financial year.

The Department of Finance carries out a range of essential central agency functions without which the ongoing business of government could not continue to occur and it is therefore essential to the wellbeing of all Nauruans that the Finance Department performs its functions in a professional, timely and robust manner.

The Department's most obvious function is the management and control of Government moneys. While this function is clearly essential in all economic climates, the current global economic crisis has exacerbated the need for the Government of Nauru to carefully manage and closely monitor government finances.

Accordingly the Department of Finance has implemented initiatives during the first quarter of 2009/10 to ensure that I, as the Minister for Finance, and all Government departments are regularly provided with reliable and accurate reports of our revenue collections and expenditures.

For the first time in some time the Department is preparing and disseminating monthly "actuals verses Budget" reports for each head. These reports show the actual revenues received and expenditures incurred on a year to date basis for each head and then compare these to the budgeted revenues and expenditures approved in the 2009/10 Budget and Appropriation Act. These reports give each Head of Department a snapshot of their financial performance to date and highlight situations where a department's revenues or expenditures vary from our budget expectations. Heads of Departments are expected to monitor their department's finances and take necessary actions to ensure that revenues and expenditures are being effectively managed.

The Department relies heavily on this "actuals" information to ensure that proposed expenditures will not exceed budget appropriations for the relevant sub head. As the year progresses and departments use more of their annual budget the ability of the department to accurately identify remaining appropriation balances becomes increasingly important and this reporting is essential to the effective control of budgeted resources. Without reliable and up to date data on actual expenditures government could inadvertently exceed budgeted appropriations.

Mr. Speaker, the global economic crisis has had a negative impact on demand for phosphate and this has meant that revenues we originally expected from RONPhos by way of dividends and royalties are now unlikely to be received. This is having material impacts on current year revenues and on our cash position.

Mr. Speaker, there is perhaps no greater threat to the economic and political stability of Nauru than that of the Government running out of cash. Without sufficient cash balances in our local and overseas accounts the government will not have the capacity to honour its financial obligations, such as paying its staff and suppliers. Accordingly, the Department has made cash flow monitoring a priority and is now maintaining a detailed cash flow forecast that shows our past, current and future cash position on a week by week basis. This report allows us to predict future government cash balances so that we can take the necessary actions required to manage our receipts and expenditures in a way that ensures we have sufficient cash balances to fund our obligations when they fall due.

In view of shortfalls in a number of revenue lines in addition to the reduced revenues from RONPhos, the Department has also made revenue collections a priority. It will come as no surprise that the global economic crisis has had implications for the business community and this has impacted some government revenues. Some businesses are finding trade credit harder to access and the reduced phosphate sales is having knock on effects through the broader Nauruan economy as RONPhos's capacity to inject money into the local economy is being tested.

Mr. Speaker at the beginning of the financial year businesses owed Government well over \$1 million in outstanding customs duties and in the first quarter the Department has made the collection of these moneys a priority. The department is closely monitoring amounts owed by all debtors and has written to all debtors seeking payment of the outstanding amounts. The department has also meet face to face with those debtors that owe government amounts over \$4,000.

I am pleased to announce that that these interactions with the business community have been undertaken in a very positive and constructive manner and have resulted in the collection of outstanding moneys and in several large debtors entering into scheduled repayment plans. I commend the business community for the positive manner in which it has worked with my Department and trust that this good relationship will continue to develop.

In the next quarter the Department intends to extend its focus to several more revenue lines to ensure that all revenues owed to government are being collected in a timely manner.

Mr. Speaker, the imperative to effectively manage and collect government revenues has emphasised the need for a more sophisticated and better resourced government revenue function.

In view of this the Department has been preparing plans for an expansion of the activities of the Revenue Office and I will be placing these before the President, in his capacity as the Minister for the Public Service, and then before Cabinet in the next quarter for their consideration.

Nauru is commencing trade negotiations with other Pacific Island Countries and it will be necessary for us to modify our customs system to comply with trade agreement requirements by reducing barriers to international trade. The department recently sent an officer to a tax administrator's conference with a view to further developing our understanding of alternate options that could be introduced to position Nauru to comply with our trade obligations.

Mr. Speaker the Treasury's focus in the first quarter has been, by necessity, on current financial issues, however I am pleased to report that the Final Budget Outcome for the 2008/09 year is nearing completion and I expect to table it in Parliament in the next month. The Departments performance in tracking 2008/09 receipts and payments was not as effective as it should have been and the delay in finalising the FBO report are regrettable. I have made it clear that I expect the Department to be in a position to complete the following FBO for 2009/10, within a month of the close of the current financial year.

Mr. Speaker, a routine but essential function of the Treasury is to process government payments. The department's role in this process is to confirm that proposed expenditures are necessary, that they represent value for money and that they are in accordance with approved budget appropriations. By the 30th of September the Department had processed around 2,400 individual payments (not counting salary payments) with a total value of 6.7 million dollars.

During the first quarter the Department implemented procedures to improve the management of funds provided to our four overseas missions, has assisted with new procedures for the procurement of goods from the Government Warehouse and has worked with the Chief Secretary's department to establish new travel procedures. In each case these new procedures will improve the management of our government resources and I have taken a very close interest in their development. I am pleased to see these new procedures are now established across government.

Mr. Speaker at the end of last financial year we established the Directorate of Payments. The Directorate was set up to take over the function of managing government payments and collections in the wake of the collapse of the Bank of Nauru. Due to budgetary constraints it was necessary to reduce the staffing of the Directorate by 50 percent and the directorate now operates effectively with just 10 officers. I am pleased that several of the officers who were made redundant by the restructure have been able to find roles elsewhere in government, including some in the Department of Finance.

Mr. Speaker so far I have focused on many of the more mechanical and procedural aspects of the Departments performance. I turn now to perhaps the most strategically important work the Department has undertaken so far this year. The review of the National Sustainable Development Strategy is amongst the most important pieces of work that this government will do.

The NSDS sets out the Government's plans for Nauru's future development. It covers government, business and social sectors and embodies more than any other document in terms of the aspirations we have for our own future and the strategies we intend to employ to achieve those aspirations. It is the road map that will guide us to a better and more prosperous future and I can not underestimate the importance of this work.

During the quarter the Department formed a working committee including the Parliamentary Counsel and the Chief Secretaries Department which has co-ordinated the review and updating of the NSDS. This has been a mammoth task that has engaged every government department, state owned enterprises as well as community representatives. The updated NSDS is now in the final stages of completion and I expect to be able to table the new document in parliament shortly.

Mr. Speaker I believe that the updated NSDS will be the most thorough and best prepared development strategy to date and it is a credit to all who have worked on it. I would particularly like to acknowledge the excellent work of Mr. Peter Depta, the economic advisor provided by the Australian Department of Treasury, Berilyn Jeremiah,

Samuel Grundler and Katy LeRoy for the role each played in the review and development of the new NSDS.

Another essential function within government is that of the Statistics Bureau. The Bureau is the eyes and ears of government in that it tracks and monitors economic and social trends thereby providing essential guidance to government about the need for action to improve Nauruan standards of living and feedback about the effectiveness of existing government policy.

During the first quarter the Bureau has increased its staffing to 5 positions and is working on implementing the necessary systems to produce National Accounting data including Gross Domestic product and balance of Trade statistics. When available these statistics will give us insights into our economic performance that will enhance our ability to develop fiscal policy and position the economy of Nauru for growth.

Finally. Mr. Speaker, Nauru relies heavily on the assistance provided by overseas donors. To this end the Aid Management Unit has continued to manage our development programs and this has entailed working with donors and other government and non government entities to develop, implement and monitor aid projects.

Mr. Speaker let me close with a word of thanks to the staff of the Department of Finance. While the functions the Department may be less obvious to Nauruans than those of say the education or health departments they are equally important to the wellbeing of the Nauruan people. This quarter I remain impressed with the commitment of the staff and of the manner in which they have approached their duties. I thank all the staff within the Department of Finance for their work and commitment and encourage each and every member of the department to continue to strive to make the department an effective organisation that works to improve the lives of all Nauruans. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Hon Baron Waqa (Boe) moved that the statement be noted.

(c) His Excellency President Marcus Stephen, as Minister for Police, made the following statement on the Handover Ceremony of Police Cars, which reads as under:-

‘Mr. Speaker, as Minister for Police, I wish to briefly inform Members of this House as well as the general public of the 3 new vehicles that were recently donated to the Nauru Police Force.

On Friday 9th October, a formal handover ceremony was conducted in the government courtyard whereby 3 new vehicles were officially handed over to the Nauru Police Force by the Acting Australian High Commissioner.

These new vehicles, 2 of which are police patrol vehicles and one a station wagon, were generously donated by the Australian Federal Police under the AFP Police Capacity Program. Altogether these 3 vehicles are worth of 100 thousand dollars.

These new vehicles will go a long way in assisting the Nauru Police Force to carry out their duties and better serve the Nauruan community. In fact, these vehicles have been put to good use and some of you may have already seen them being driven around Nauru by members of our police force.

I take this opportunity to extend on behalf of the government and people of Nauru and in particular the Nauru Police Force our deepest thanks and appreciation to the Australian Federal Police and the government and people of Australia. My personal thanks must go to George Fraser, the acting High Commissioner of Australia, for his assistance in facilitating the arrival of these vehicles.

In closing, I would just like to remind us all of the serious lack of resources and equipment on Nauru. It is important that we do not abuse nor waste what we have. So I urge the members of the Nauru Police Force to act responsibly and professionally by taking good care of these vehicles. Thank you.'

(d) Hon Kieren Keke (Minister for Finance) made the following statement on the Demographic & Health Survey 2007, as follows:-

'Mr. Speaker and Honourable Colleagues, this report and accompanying factsheets summarizes the findings of the 2007 Nauru Demographic and Health Survey implemented by the Nauru Bureau of Statistics in coordination with the Ministry of Health. The Secretariat of the Pacific Community was the executing agency for the project. The Government of Nauru provided financial assistance in terms of in-kind contributions. The project was funded by the Asian Development Bank, AusAID, New Zealand Aid and the UNFPA. Macro International Inc. (Calverton, Maryland, USA) provided technical assistance as part of its contract with the Asian Development Bank.

The survey covered key areas related to health in Nauru that can assist government, policy makers, and planners in the development of population and health policies or strategies. The findings and indicators derived updates Nauru's comparative stance in terms of the UN-MDG's and other statistical measures as well as provides or establishes a measure of current development under Nauru's National Sustainable Development Strategies.

The report contains in-depth analysis of the findings of the survey while the associated factsheet summarizes the key findings of the report for quick references as well as some suggested policy implications derived from such findings.

A brief summary of findings

The 2007 Nauru DHS is a nationally representative survey of 655 eligible women (aged 15-49) and 392 eligible men (aged 15 and above). The primary purpose was to furnish policy-makers and planners with detailed information on fertility, family planning, infant and child mortality, maternal and child health, nutrition, and knowledge of HIV and AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections.

Fertility - *The Total Fertility rate was measured at 3.4 births per woman. Meaning on average every woman on Nauru will have 3 to 4 children by the end of her reproductive period (between 15 – 49yrs).*

Child bearing begins early for women on Nauru, where on average women would have already had 2 or 3 children before they reach the age of twenty, and may have more than four children by the time they reach age 50. The median age at first birth is

22yrs. Likewise, the median age at first marriage is 22 years for older women (45-49yrs), and 21 years for younger women (25-29yrs), which is also an important determinant of fertility levels within the population. Births intervals in Nauru are generally short showing a median birth interval of 28.5 months or just over 2 yrs between each child.

Family Planning - Overall knowledge of family planning in Nauru was found to be generally high with 93 percent of all women and 99 percent of all men between ages 15-49yrs having heard of at least one form of contraception.

Modern methods are widely used compared to the traditional methods with 51 percent of married women using modern methods that can be accessed either through the hospital or other means. However, overall, 24 percent of married women have an unmet need for family planning services which focuses attention on current health services or maybe even educational services for women.

Maternal Health - Ninety five percent of women who had a live birth within the five years preceding the survey received antenatal care from a skilled health professional. Two in five women (40 percent) made four or more antenatal care visits during their entire pregnancy. Among women who received antenatal care, about two in five (39.6 percent) reported that they were informed about recognizing signs of problems during pregnancy. Only 19 percent of women received the mandatory tetanus injections. Over nine in ten births occurred in a health facility, and 8 percent were delivered by caesarean section.

Postpartum care was extremely high, however only 18 percent of women who had a live birth in five years preceding the survey received no postnatal care at all. Common problems cited in accessing health care in Nauru included no drugs, no provider and no transport to health centers.

Child Health - Eighty six percent of children aged 18-29 months were fully vaccinated at the time of the survey. About 98 percent had received the BCG vaccination while 95 percent were vaccinated against measles. Coverage on DPT-polio was poor due to these vaccines being administered at roughly the same time hence recall by respondents was poor, however coverage rates are expected to be similar. However results from stock-outs of vaccines show a slightly different picture suggesting a significant drop-off between the first dosage (98 percent), and subsequently by the third dosage with only 81 percent receiving the DPT and 91 percent receiving the polio vaccines. It is therefore important to better educate mothers on completing vaccinations for their children so as to avoid any complications later on.

Occurrences of diarrhoea varied by age, where children aged less than two were found to be more prone than children in other ages. There was very little variance between the sexes. It was found that children within the middle and highest economic quintile were more susceptible to diarrhoea than those in the lowest quintile group, and likewise for those households with no improved source of drinking water.

Almost three in four children (70 percent) with diarrhoea were treated with some kind of oral rehydration therapy (ORT) or increased fluids. More than one in five (23 percent) were treated with ORS, while 30 percent were given recommended home fluids, and 45 percent were given increased fluids.

Foster-hood and Orphan-hood - About 65 percent of children less than 18 years live with biological parents, while 11 percent live with a mother but not a father even though the father is alive. Approximately about one fifth (15 percent) of children do not live with either parent and these children were likely to be between the ages 15 and 17 years and from within the second economic quintile. Eight percent of these children either have one or both parent that has deceased.

Breastfeeding and Nutrition - Breastfeeding in Nauru was found to be nearly universal, with nearly 95 percent of children born in the five years preceding the survey having been breastfed at some time. There were very little variances to suggest the existence of significant differences between economic quintiles or the poorest households compared with the richest in terms of breastfeeding.

Children between the ages of 6 to 23 months tended to consume foods made from grains more often than other foods. The next most commonly consumed food was meat, fish poultry and eggs, the third being fruits and vegetables rich in vitamin A.

In contrast 81 percent of children had been fed a minimally diverse diet according to standards of the minimum number of food groups depending on age and breastfeeding status, and 43 percent were fed the minimum number of times appropriate for their age. This in perspective translates to two in five children (37.7 percent) aged 6-23 months met the minimum standard with respect to all three infant and young feeding practices.

The prevalence rate of anaemia among Nauruan women aged 15-49 years was 34 percent and was more common among young women aged 15-19 years who have had two or three children, smoked and found within the lowest economic wealth quintile group. But what is very disturbing is that more than half of the 255 children aged 6-59 months were found to have anaemia during the survey. However, the prevalence of anaemia showed a declining trend with the increase of age in children.

HIV, AIDS and STI's - In Nauru, knowledge about AIDS is not as high as other islands such Marshall Islands who undertook the same survey. Men (83 percent) were found to be more knowledgeable than women (73 percent) about the disease. Questions asked of respondents were specifically targeting contraception use, sexual activity and transmission factors. More information can be obtained from the report.

Mortality - In the zero to four years age group before the survey, the infant mortality rate was 38 deaths per 1,000 live births. This means that four in every 100 babies born in Nauru do not live to their first birthday. Those who live past their first birthday will survive until they reach their fifth birthday where a further 4 in every 100 children under

the age of five will not survive past their fifth birthday. The under five mortality was found to be 38 deaths per 1,000 live births or similarly 4 in every 100 babies.

Nauru's infant mortality rate during the 10 years before the survey was 40 deaths per 1,000 live births and under five mortality was found to be 44 deaths per 1,000 live births. About 21 percent of births in Nauru were not in any high risk category and another 20 percent of births were in an unavoidable risk category. The remaining 59 percent of births were in at least one of the specified avoidable high risk categories. These risk categories are further elaborated on in the report.

Mr. Speaker, in tabling this valuable report for the information and benefit of Members, I have given a brief summary of the kind of detail and information that the report provides. I trust Members will find it a useful and effective reference tool.

In closing, I would like to express Government's sincere appreciation to all the organisations that have contributed and assisted us in undertaking this survey and in finalising the report.

I would also like to especially acknowledge the great work our own Bureau of Statistics and its staff have undertaken on this report. Their individual efforts are truly commendable and should be evidence of the value of further strengthening our Bureau.

Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Hon Dominic Tabuna (Yaren) moved that the statement be noted

(e) Hon Kieren Keke (Minister for Finance) laid on the Table of the House, inter-subhead transfers pursuant to Section 4, subsection 3 of the Appropriation Act 2009/2010:-

'Mr. Speaker and Honourable Colleagues, today I table for Parliament the statement recording inter sub-head transfers (ISHTs) approved by Cabinet since the last sitting of Parliament.

Taiwan – Head 75 - *The Embassy in Taipei made a donation towards the ROC Taiwan Red Cross Society for the victims of Typhoon Morakot. Sub-head 455 for Subsidies/Donation-General is supplemented by a decrease in sub-head 355/001 for Purchase of Petrol by an amount of AUD\$370 equivalent to NTD\$10,000.*

Taiwan – Head 75 - *-The Embassy of Taipei has nominated an amount of \$5,550 to transfer from sub-head 251 for Travel Staff to sub-head 255 for Travel Business to cover the cost of travelling to Nauru to attend the Donor Round Table meeting which will be held from 16 to 20 November 2009*

SUMMARY OF INTER-SUBHEAD TRANSFERS

Increases

Head	Agency	Subhead No.	Item	Increase (\$)
75	Taiwan	455	Subsidies/Donation General	370
75	Taiwan	255	Travel Business	5,550

Decreases

Head	Agency	Subhead No.	Item	Decrease (\$)
75	Taiwan	355/001	Purchase of Petrol	370
75	Taiwan	251	Travel Staff	5,550

7. Motion:

His Excellency the President moved that Motion No1 on the Notice Paper, be withdrawn.

Hon Kieren Keke (Minister for Finance) seconded.

Question put and passed.

His Excellency the President moved that Motions Nos 2,3,4,5 & 6 be deferred to the next sitting.

Hon Kieren Keke, (Minister for Finance) seconded.

Question put and passed.

8. Leave To Introduce a Bill

His Excellency the President, sought leave of the House to present the Births, Deaths and Marriages (Amendment) Bill 2009.

Leave was granted.

First Reading

The Bill was presented and read a first time.

9. Motion : Second Reading

His Excellency the President, moved that the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon Kieren Keke (Minister for Finance) seconded

Second Reading speech ensued.

‘Mr. Speaker, I have introduced to this House today a short Bill for an Act to amend the Births, Deaths and Marriages Ordinance and that is to amend Section 5 in relation to the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages. Under the Ordinance in its present form, Section 5 provides that ‘the Official Secretary to the Administration (meaning Chief Secretary) shall be ex officio Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages’. The existing Ordinance also provides for a Deputy Registrar, who has and may exercise all the powers and functions of the Registrar under the Ordinance. In practice, it is the Deputy Registrar who performs the functions of the office.

Earlier this year, as part of a restructuring of the Chief Secretary’s Department, Cabinet resolved to establish the position of Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages as a position separate to that of the Chief Secretary and budget provision has been made

accordingly. *This Bill therefore seeks to amend Section 5 to provide that, rather than the Chief Secretary being the ex officio Registrar, the Registrar is a public officer appointed by the President. What this means is that the President can appoint a public officer to hold the substantive position of Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages, so that the person who actually performs the functions of the office holds the position of Registrar, rather than being designated Deputy Registrar.*

Mr. Speaker, this Bill is therefore essentially just a minor housekeeping matter, but one that will bring the law into line with the reality of how the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages operates in practice.

Mr. Speaker, I commend this Bill to the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.'
Debate was adjourned to a future date (S.O159).

10. Leave to Introduce a Bill

Hon Mathew Batsiua (Minister for Justice, Health and Sports) sought leave of the House to introduce the Criminal Justice (Amendment) Bill 2009.
Leave was granted.

First Reading:

The Bill was presented and read a first time.

11. Motion: Second Reading

Hon Mathew Batsiua (Minister for Justice, Health and Sports) moved that the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon Kieren Keke (Minister for Finance) seconded.

Second Reading speech ensued.

'Mr. Speaker, I have introduced to this House today a short Bill for an Act to amend the Criminal Justice Act 1999. The Bill contains only 5 clauses and is quite straightforward. The main aim of this Bill is to make the system of parole fairer.

It may be useful to provide a brief outline of the background to this amendment. The Criminal Justice Act was passed by Parliament in 1999, with the aim of providing for new methods of dealing with offenders liable to imprisonment through a system of probation, community service and parole. Until this year the provisions relating to parole were effectively dormant, because the Parole Board had not been established. These provisions have been brought to life with the appointment this year of the Parole Board in accordance with the Act.

Since the Parole Board commenced, a number of problems with its operations have become apparent. One problem is that the Act currently provides that the Board is to be chaired by the Chief Justice. This is a problem not only because the Chief Justice is seldom on the island, but also because he is, in most cases that come before the Parole Board, also the sentencing judge and therefore perhaps not the most appropriate

person to be making decisions as to parole. The Chief Justice himself has indicated that he is somewhat uncomfortable with this role.

Another problem is the absence of any clear procedure for applying for parole. Under the existing Act, prisoners who are serving life sentence automatically become eligible to have parole considered after serving a prescribed term of imprisonment, but all other prisoners will only have parole considered if a member of the Parole Board requests the Board to consider the case.

The principal objectives of this Bill are therefore to alter the composition of the Parole Board so that it no longer includes the Chief Justice and to make provisions for application to the Parole Board. The intention behind these proposed amendments is to make the process of considering and granting parole fairer and more transparent.

Mr. Speaker, the explanatory memorandum that accompanies the Bill explains in detail the meaning and effect of each clause of the Bill.

In summary, clause 3 would amend Section 32 of the Criminal Justice Act with the effect that the Chief Justice would no longer be the Chairman of the Parole Board, but rather, the Chairman would be a person appointed by the Minister, who is a non-Nauruan but lives in Nauru and who is not a judge but who has tertiary qualifications in medicine, law, psychology, criminology or other discipline deemed by the Minister to be relevant. The rationale behind prescribing that the person should be a non-Nauruan is to ensure that at least one member of the Board is a non-Nauruan, who is therefore unlikely to be related to or personally acquainted with the applicants for parole, and therefore better able to be completely objective in considering applications for parole.

Clause 4 of the Bill would amend Section 34 of the principal Act by amending subsection (2), repealing subsections (3) to (7) and inserting new subsections (3) to (6). In summary, the main effect of these proposed amendments would be –

- To remove the distinction between prisoners serving a life sentence for murder and those serving a life sentence for any other crime, and to remove the automatic consideration of such cases after a prescribed period, and to provide instead that any prisoner serving a life sentence may apply for parole after serving 10 years of his sentence.
- To make a new provision that an offender serving 12 months or more may apply for parole after serving half of his sentence; and
- To delete the provisions that a member of the Board may at any time request the Board to consider a case and to provide instead that the Parole Board can only consider applications made in accordance to Section 34(3).

Clause 5 of the Bill would remove the provision currently found in subsection (3) Section 36 which says that a person who has served the full sentence of imprisonment imposed on him by the court and is released from prison is under probation for one year from the date of his release. It is proposed to delete this provision because it is considered unreasonable to effectively extend a person's sentence beyond that which was imposed by the court. This clause would also amend subsection (1) of Section 36 for the purpose of bringing it into line with the Correctional Service Act, as explained in the explanatory memorandum

Mr. Speaker, in preparing this Bill for presentation to Parliament, careful thought has been given to the distinction between remission and parole, and how the two different concepts interact. Remission means that a person's sentence is reduced and he is released as a free person. A person cannot apply for remission; either he earns it based on good behaviour, or he doesn't. Parole on the other hand is still a form of sentence. A person who is released from prison on parole is still under sentence, and is on probation until the expiry of his sentence. The criteria for remission and parole are not the same ; remission may be earned under the Correctional Service Act for good behaviour, and parole is usually granted not specifically for good behaviour but because of factors such as the desire to get people back in the community, reducing overcrowding in prisons, and the desirability of release (on probation) of a prisoner who is rehabilitated and who is considered safe. Good behaviour will be helpful to a person who is applying for parole, but it is not the only or even an essential factor. Section 34(8) of the Criminal Justice Act lists the criteria that the Parole Board must have regard to when considering a case for people, which include the safety of the public, the likelihood of re-offending, the welfare of the offender and any recommendation made by the head of the prison.

Because a person released from prison on parole is still under sentence, and may if he breaches the conditions of his probation be placed back in prison, and also taking into account the reasons for which parole is usually granted, there are good reasons for making the point at which a person is eligible to apply for parole earlier than the point at which they could be freely released from prison because of remission. Therefore whilst under the Correctional Service Act passed by this House in August, the earliest point at which a person can be released by way of remission is after serving two-thirds of their sentence, this Bill proposed that the Criminal Justice Act should provide that the earliest point at which a person is eligible to apply for parole is after serving one half or their sentence (or in the case of prisoners serving life sentence after serving).

To provide an example of what this would mean if a particular prisoner was granted the earliest possible parole and the maximum possible remission a prisoner who was sentenced to 6 years imprisonment, who behaved well and was rehabilitated in prison, and who was assessed as being unlikely to re-offend could through his good behaviour earn remission of one third of his sentence, which would reduce his effective sentence to 4 years. This prisoner could apply for and be granted parole after serving 3 years of his sentence, which would mean that he would be released on probation until the expiry of his effective sentence. In other words, he could be released after 3 years, be on probation for one year and be a free man after 4 years.

Mr. Speaker, the amendments to the Criminal Justice Act proposed in this Bill will serve to make the system of parole more fair and transparent, and, as a complement to the behavioural incentive of remission, will make parole another effective incentive for reform, rehabilitation and good behaviour of prisoners.

Mr. Speaker, I commend this Bill to the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.'
Debate was adjourned to a future date (S.O 159)

12. Leave to move a Motion

His Excellency the President, sought leave of the House to move a motion, to establish a Select Committee on Land Issues.

Leave was granted.

13. Motion

His Excellency the President moved the following motion:-

- (1) *That pursuant to Standing Order 197, the House resolves to establish a Select Committee to be known as the Select Committee on Land Issues, to inquire into land matters for the purpose of gathering information, background material and public opinion on certain land issues as the first step in a broad review of land issues and land laws, and that such Committee report to the House, on or before 30 June 2010, on the matters referred to the Committee under paragraph (5) of this motion;*
- (2) *That the Committee consists of nine Members, namely –*
 - H.E. Marcus Stephen*
 - Hon. Roland Kun*
 - Hon. Freddie Pitcher*
 - Hon. Ludwig Scotty*
 - Hon. Ryke Solomon*
 - Hon. Dominic Tabuna*
 - Hon. Godfrey Thoma*
 - Hon. Valdon Dowiyogo*
 - Hon. Baron Waqa*
- (3) *That the quorum of the Committee be five Members;*
- (4) *That the Committee have power to send for and examine persons, papers and records;*
- (5) *That in conducting its inquiry, the Committee examine the following matters –*
 - (a) *the system of land ownership in Nauru, including inheritance of land and fragmentation of land portions;*
 - (b) *the system of administration of land matters in Nauru including the handling, storage and preservation of land records, decision-making in respect of land matters, handling of land disputes and recording of decisions and other information in respect of land ownership;*
 - (c) *The Lands Act 1976 and all other laws relating to land issues in Nauru so as to clearly ascertain the current state of land laws in Nauru;*
 - (d) *the classification, zoning and uses of land in Nauru and derivation of income from land;*
 - (e) *access to land for landless Nauruans;*
 - (f) *perceived problems with or shortcomings of any of the matters listed in paragraphs (a) to (e);*

- (g) *the views of the community in relation to the matters listed in paragraphs (a) to (e) and in relation to any other land issues of concern to the community; and*
 - (h) *any other matter that the Committee deems necessary or relevant to enable it to complete its report on land issues.*
- (6) *That, in its report to Parliament, the Committee –*
- (a) *need not identify proposed solutions to any perceived problems that have been identified through its inquiry into and examination of land issues, but may make recommendations as to certain identified issues that may, in the course of the broader review of land issues and land laws, require further attention and/or expert advice; and*
 - (b) *shall present a fair summary of the information gathered by it and of the evidence and views presented to it; and*
 - (c) *shall present its findings in relation to the current state of land laws in Nauru.*
- (7) *That the Committee may hold closed meetings from which all strangers are excluded, but that wherever practicable the Committee shall hold its meetings in public.*
- (8) *That the first meeting of the Committee shall be held on Friday, 16 October 2009 at 12.00 p.m.*
- (9) *That the Committee may present progressive reports and recommendations to Parliament as it deems fit.*
- (10) *That the foregoing provisions of this motion so far as they are inconsistent with the Standing Orders, have effect notwithstanding anything contained in the Standing Orders.*

Hon. Dr. Kieren Keke (Minister for Finance) seconded.

Debate ensued.

Question put and passed.

14. Orders of the Day No.1: Civil Aviation Bill 2009

His Excellency the President moved that the second reading of the Bill be deferred to the next sitting as the Minister in charge of the Bill is away overseas.

Hon. Kieren Keke (Minister for Finance) seconded.

Question put and passed

15. Orders of the Day No.2: Ministerial Statement & Tabling of Papers

That the statement made by the Minister for Transport on Development of the Nauru Port Authority be noted.

Debate was deferred to the next sitting as the Minister in charge of the Paper is away overseas.

16. Orders of the Day No.3: Ministerial Statement & Tabling of Papers

That the statement made by the Minister for C.I.E on updates on developments and achievements by the Utilities Sector be noted.

Debate ensued.

The Statement was noted.

17. Orders of the Day No.4: Ministerial Statement & Tabling of Papers

That the statement made by the Minister for Education on developments in the Department of Education be noted.

Debate ensued.

The statement was noted.

18. Orders of the Day No.5: Ministerial Statement & Tabling of Papers

That the statement made by His Excellency the President, on his appointment as Chancellor of USP be noted.

Debate ensued.

The statement was noted.

19. Orders of the Day No.6: Ministerial Statement & Tabling of Papers

That the statement made by the Minister for Transport, on Our Airline services to Tarawa and Nadi be noted.

Debate was deferred to the next sitting as the Minister in charge of the Paper is away overseas.

20. Orders of the Day No.7: Ministerial Statement & Tabling of Papers

That the statement made by the Minister for Justice on reform measures in the Department of Border Control and Immigration be noted.

Debate ensued.

The statement was noted.

21. Orders of the Day No. 8: Ministerial Statement & Tabling of Papers

That the statement made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade on the NSDS reports, be noted.

Debate ensued.

The statement was noted.

22. Orders of the Day No. 9: Ministerial Statement & Tabling of Papers

That the statement made by the Minister for Telecommunications on Digicel, Nauru, be noted.

Debate was deferred to the next sitting as the Minister concerned is away overseas

Leave of Absence Sought

His Excellency the President sought leave of absence for Hon Sprent Dabwido (Minister for Transport) and Hon Aloysius Amwano (Ubenide) as both are away overseas.

Leave of absences were granted.

23. Motion Fixing the Date for the Next Sitting.

His Excellency the President, moved that the House at its rising do adjourn until next Thursday morning, 15th October 2009 at 10.00am.

Hon Kieren Keke (Minister for Finance) seconded.

Question put and passed.

24. Adjournment.

His Excellency the President moved that the House do now adjourn.

Adjournment debate ensued.

Question put and passed.

And then the House at seven minutes past eight o'clock pm, adjourned until next Thursday morning at 10.00 am

Members Present:

All Members were present at sometime during the sitting except;

Mr Dabwido – Leave of absence

Mr Amwano – Leave of absence

Mr Adeang - Suspension

Frederick Cain
Clerk of Parliament