

# BILL WATCH 55/2019

[24th October 2019]

## Both Houses of Parliament are Sitting This Week

### Parliament Criticised for Low Output of Bills Last Session

When opening the current session of Parliament on 1st October the President criticised Parliament's low output of Bills during the last session:

*"The slow pace in this august House – I repeat, the slow pace in this august House – which has resulted in a low number of Bills passing through Parliament, cannot be allowed to continue. I thus challenge Hon. Members in their individual and collective capacities to play their part in speeding up our parliamentary processes."*

But did the Government give Parliament a fair chance of passing even half the legislative agenda for the session? No.

Too many Bills seem to have reached Parliament too late in the session to have any hope of being completed.

This bulletin looks back at the last session and lists the Bills passed, the Acts of Parliament gazetted, the Bills that lapsed at the end of the session as unfinished business [having been introduced but not completed by the end of the session] and Bills on the session's legislative agenda that the Government failed to produce.

### The Executive is Responsible for Getting its Bills to Parliament

The President set a legislative agenda of 30 Bills. Predictions that it was far too optimistic were, sadly, proved right. The Government and its Ministries and legislative drafters fell lamentably short of enabling Parliament to give effect to the Government's legislative ambitions.

On 25th September 2018, a week after the last session opened, the Speaker addressed an Induction Seminar for Ministers and Deputy Ministers and gave Ministers an ultimatum on presentation of Bills in the Legislative Agenda.

*"We are going to wait for you for a month and if no Bill that has been tabled by His Excellency is coming from a Ministry, please know that we shall summon you to Parliament and ask you why you are not complying with the legislative agenda that was presented to Parliament by His Excellency."*

The Speaker correctly emphasised that it is up to Ministers to ensure that Bills on the Government's Legislative Agenda are sent to Parliament and it is also, of course, up to Ministers to pilot their Bills through both Houses of Parliament. Long delays in producing Bills for Parliament and absenteeism by Ministers contributed to a low legislative output.

### Bills Passed during the Last Session

*[Bills from the 2018-2019 Legislative Agenda underlined]*

No Bills were passed in the period September to December 2018. The following

nine Bills were passed by Parliament during the remainder of the session, which ended on 30th September:

### **Five Bills were gazetted as Acts**

Appropriation (2019) Bill, 2019 [gazetted as Act on 20th February 2019]  
Appropriation Supplementary (2019) Bill, 2019 [gazetted as Act 21st August 2019]  
Finance (No. 2) Bill, 2019 [gazetted as Act 21st August 2019]  
Finance Bill, 2019 [gazetted as Act on 20th February 2019]  
Tripartite Negotiating Forum Bill, 2019 [gazetted as Act 4th June 2019]

### **Four Bills not yet sent to President for assent and gazetting as Acts**

Companies and Other Business Entities Bill [passed 29th May, Act proofs to drafters 10th June, returned to Parliament 25th September]  
Consumer Protection Bill [passed 18th June, Act proofs to drafters 26th June]  
Microfinance Amendment Bill [passed 18th June, Act proofs to drafters 26th June]  
Maintenance of Peace and Order Bill [passed 29th August, Act proofs to drafters 10th September]

### **Other Bills that Reached Parliament during the Last Session**

*[Bills from the 2018-2019 Legislative Agenda underlined]*

### **Seven partly-Processed Bills that Lapsed at the End of the Last Session**

Coroner's Office Bill [for continuation of Second Reading debate in National Assembly]  
Education Amendment Bill [disagreement between Senate and National Assembly to be resolved]  
Freedom of Information Bill [awaiting Parliamentary Legal Committee [PLC] report]  
Marriages Bill [awaiting PLC report]  
Money Laundering and Proceeds of Crime Amendment Bill [for continuation of Second Reading debate in National Assembly]  
Zimbabwe Investment and Development Agency Bill [awaiting continuation of National Assembly Committee Stage]  
Zimbabwe Media Commission Bill [awaiting PLC report].

*Note: The National Assembly's agenda for the agenda for today, 24th October, includes a motion for six of these Bills to be restored to the Order Paper [the only Bill not listed for restoration is the Zimbabwe Investment and Development Agency Bill].*

### **Three Bills gazetted during the last session but not introduced**

Constitutional Court Bill [gazetted 18th September].  
International Treaties Bill [gazetted 6th September]  
Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe Amendment Bill [gazetted 23rd July]

## **21 Legislative Agenda Bills the Executive Failed to Produce**

Broadcasting Services Amendment Bill  
Child Justice Bill  
Citizenship Amendment Bill  
Co-operative Societies Amendment Bill  
Customary Law and Local Courts Bill  
Customary Law and Local Courts Bill  
Cyber Crime and Cyber Security Bill  
Gold Trade Bill  
Immigration Amendment Bill  
Institute of Education Research, Innovation and Development Bill  
Labour Amendment Bill  
Mandatory Sentencing for Rape and Sexual Offences Bill  
Mines and Minerals Amendment Bill  
Precious Stones Trade Bill  
Provincial and Metropolitan Councils Bill  
Public Finance Management Amendment Bill.  
Regional, Town and Country Planning Bill  
Rural District Councils Bill  
Traditional Leaders Amendment Bill

## **Statistics for Last Session's Legislative Output**

### **Bills**

Legislative agenda Bills passed: 3  
Other Bills passed: 6  
Total Bills passed: 9

### **Acts**

Acts gazetted so far: 5  
Acts awaited: 4

### **Legislative agenda Bills**

Total Bills listed: 30  
Bills passed: 3  
Lapsed Bills: 6  
Bills not received by Parliament: 21

*Veritas makes every effort to ensure reliable information, but cannot take legal responsibility for information supplied.*

*If you want to contact Veritas, have any questions or wish to subscribe or unsubscribe please email [veritas@mango.zw](mailto:veritas@mango.zw)*

*If you are looking for legislation please look for it on [www.veritaszim.net](http://www.veritaszim.net)*

Follow us on     (+263 71 893 3633)



*This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/).*