Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I would like to thank the Hon Member who made the Statement for bringing this issue to Parliament and to request that some stated actions be taken. I have two examples to give: First of all, when I travelled to Germany, I met a friend and there was a tree standing in his yard his intention was to cut down the tree because it was becoming a nuisance. The requirement for him to do that was to go to the Forestry Department to take a permission to be able to cut down the tree. He went and he was charged ten thousand euros (€10,000) in order to cut down the tree that was in his yard.

Mr Speaker, the second example is that, when I was in office, a group of young people came to me and requested me to support them to transport rosewood from my constituency to Accra for export. I reminded them that there was a ban on it. They told me that the ban was not working, and that in Ghana, there was no such law so if I would help them, I should. They also said that, even though the ban was in place, the Chinese were cutting the rosewood and exporting them. So, we could juxtapose the two positions and see the situation we are in, in Ghana.

In Ghana, people walk into the forest and start cutting down trees and nobody cares. It does not matter to anybody. We are degrading the environment and destroying our future. The people who are doing these things are not Ghanaians. We have no use for rosewoods except to use it for charcoal. The people who need it and are doing it are outsiders and they are actively being supported by our own people, and it is destroying the environment and giving us a future that is very bleak. This is because when we have cut down these trees and destroyed the environment to that extent, what would be left would be pain and suffering.

I travelled along the road between Techiman and Bamboe, and after Bamboe, I saw that a whole area that was populated with trees and shrubs was now lying bare. This is because, we would find people active there with chainsaws, cutting down shrubs and small trees and gathering them into articulated trucks to bring them to Accra. Mr Speaker, what is more painful is that, even though there is a ban, they go to our harbour and they are allowed to export these products out of the country. The impression is that, we do not enforce our laws. There are laws against felling of trees and the export of timber but they are not properly regulated.

So, we still have these things happening in the country. I, therefore, want to support Hon Apaak, that we have to investigate the issue and create a situation where the law would work. Parliament should show active interest in it. This is because the situation where enforcement becomes a child’s play in this country is worrying. Mr Speaker, I would like you to add your voice to this Statement ably presented by Hon Apaak, so that we could be seen doing something about it. In the end, it would be us, today’s generation who are leading the country, who would be questioned by the future generation. They would say that we were here and superintended over
these ills and the treatment meted out to our environment and that would have bad consequences in the lives of our children and grandchildren.

I, therefore, congratulate Hon Apaak and support the Statement in all aspects of its presentation.