



**REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA**

**REPORT**

**OF THE**

**COMMITTEE ON YOUTH, SPORT AND CHILD MATTERS**

**ON THE**

**THE NATIONAL ARTS COUNCIL OF ZAMBIA (AMENDMENT) BILL, N.A.B.  
NO. 20 OF 2026**

**FOR THE**

**FIFTH SESSION OF THE THIRTEENTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

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## FOREWORD

Honourable Madam Speaker, the Committee on Youth, Sport and Child Matters, has the honour to present its Report on the National Arts Council of Zambia Bill, N.A.B No. 20 of 2026, for the Fifth Session of the Thirteenth National Assembly. The functions of the Committee are set out under Standing Orders 206(o) and 207(j) of the National Assembly of Zambia Standing Orders, 2024.

The Committee held five (5) meetings to consider the Bill. In order to gain insight into the ramifications of the Bill, the Committee sought both written and oral submissions from various stakeholders, the list of which is at Appendix II of the Report.

The Report is in three Parts. Part I contains the salient provisions of the Bill. Part II highlights concerns raised by stakeholders, while Part III contains the Committee's observations and recommendations.

The Committee wishes to pay tribute to all stakeholders who appeared before it and tendered both written and oral submissions. It further wishes to thank you, Madam Speaker, for affording it the opportunity to consider the National Arts Council of Zambia (Amendment) Bill, N.A.B. No. 20 of 2026. The Committee also appreciates the services rendered by the Office of the Clerk during its deliberations.



Mr Heartson Mabeta, MP  
CHAIRPERSON

May, 2026  
LUSAKA

## **ACRONYMS**

NAC- National Arts Council

MSME-Ministry of Small to Medium Enterprises

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## **1.0 MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE**

Mr Heartson Mabetwa, MP (Chairperson); Ms Jean Chisenga, MP (Vice-Chairperson); Mr Siphon Hlazo, MP; Mr Allen Banda, MP; Mr Elijah Muchima, MP; Mr Ackleo Banda, MP; Mr George Chisanga, MP; Ms Emeldah Munashabantu, MP; Mr Robert Kalimi, MP; and Mr Justin Kapema, MP.

## **2.0 BACKGROUND**

The National Arts Council of Zambia (NAC) is a statutory body established under the *National Arts Council of Zambia Act, of 1994* and became operational in 1996. Its mandate is to provide a structured framework for the development, regulation, and promotion of the arts sector in Zambia, and to serve as the Government's principal advisory body on arts and cultural policy.

The Bill therefore, seeks to amend the *National Arts Council of Zambia Act, Chapter 170 of the Laws of Zambia*, in order to reconstitute the composition of the Council. The objective is to streamline membership and introduce a more structured, skills-based approach to governance.

Although the Principal Act provides for broad representation across diverse arts sectors, it does not align with evolving standards for the composition of boards, commissions, and committees in public institutions. There is therefore a need to amend the Act to ensure adequate private sector participation; gender balance; and national representation. Once enacted, the Bill is expected to enhance the operational efficiency, inclusivity, balanced representation, and accountability of the NAC.

## **3.0 OBJECT OF THE BILL**

The object of the Bill is to amend the National Arts Council of Zambia Act, so as to:

- (a) revise the composition of the National Arts Council of Zambia; and
- (b) provide for matters connected with, or incidental to the foregoing.

## **PART I**

### **4.0 SALIENT PROVISIONS OF THE BILL**

The salient provisions of the Bill are as set out hereunder.

#### **Clause 1 Short Title and Commencement**

Clause 1 provides for short title and commencement. The Act may be cited as the *National Arts Council of Zambia (Amendment) Act, 2026*, and shall be read as one with the *National Arts Council of Zambia Act*, in this Act referred to as the Principal Act. Further, the Act, stipulates the operation period of the Act as being upon expiry of the term of office of members among others.

### **Clause 3 Amendment of Schedule**

Clause 3 seeks to amend section 2 of the Principal Act by the introduction of a new provision that seeks to provide for the appointment of part-time members by the minister, and (a) representatives each from the ministries responsible for tourism; commerce; education and arts among others.

## **PART II**

### **5.0 CONCERNS RAISED BY STAKEHOLDERS**

All stakeholders who appeared before the Committee supported the Bill. However, the following concerns were raised.

#### **5.1 Clause 3: Amendment of Section 2**

Stakeholders noted that clause 3(d) reduced representation from the existing structure, which previously provided for ten sector-specific representatives, to three representatives drawn from the most representative associations. They observed that this reduction could weaken sector ownership, inclusivity, and the diversity of perspectives in the Council's deliberations.

Stakeholders further submitted that the removal of the Director of Cultural Services from the Council under the proposed framework, risked weakening the institutional link between arts governance and national cultural policy. They expressed concern that this omission could create a disconnect between the National Arts Council and broader cultural governance structures, and potentially limit the Council's responsiveness to issues such as cultural preservation; traditional knowledge systems; and heritage-based artistic practices. It was also noted that the absence of this expertise could constrain engagement with cultural institutions, festivals, and traditional leadership structures integral to the sector.

In relation to the nomination of three representatives from the most representative arts and creative industry associations, stakeholders acknowledged that the proposal would enhance efficiency and streamline deliberations. However, they expressed concern that the term "most representative" was undefined, potentially allowing for subjective selection by the appointing authority and the exclusion of emerging or less formalised groups. This, they argued, could undermine inclusivity within the broader arts ecosystem.

Stakeholders also raised concern on ministerial representation on the Council. They expressed concern regarding the exclusion of the Ministry responsible for Small and Medium Enterprises, noting that the Ministry of Commerce primarily focused on large enterprises. They recommended that it be replaced with the Ministry responsible for Small and Medium Enterprises, given that most artists and cultural practitioners operated within the MSME sector. They further observed that such representation would enhance expertise in the formalisation, financing, and growth of creative enterprises.

Finally, stakeholders supported the inclusion of legal representation on the Board from the Law Association of Zambia and the Office of the Attorney General. However, they raised concern about potential duplication of roles arising from the appointment of two

legal representatives. They, therefore, recommended that only one legal representative be retained, with the resulting vacancy allocated to a representative of arts associations to enhance sector inclusivity.

### **PART III**

#### **6.0 COMMITTEE'S OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Committee observes that all stakeholders who appeared before it expressed support for the Bill. Arising from its engagement with the stakeholders and its consideration of the submissions presented, the Committee resolves to support the Bill. In supporting the Bill, however, the Committee makes the observations and recommendations outlined below.

##### **i) Provide for Independent Legal Representation**

The Committee observes that clause 3 proposes the inclusion of two legal representatives, namely the Attorney General and the Law Association of Zambia. The Committee is of the considered view that this arrangement may result in duplication of roles. It further notes that the inclusion of a representative from the Attorney General's Office increases government representation on the Board relative to the private sector, thereby potentially undermining the principles of good corporate governance. The Committee emphasises the need for independent legal representation capable of providing unbiased legal advice, particularly from the private sector.

In this regard, the Committee recommends that clause 3, which seeks to repeal and replace Section 2(1)(b) of the Principal Act, be amended by replacing the Attorney General's representative with a representative from the National Arts Associations. This will preserve meaningful representation of artists, whose representation has been reduced, while also ensuring balanced and independent legal input on the Board.

##### **ii) Devise criteria for selection of three Most Representative Associations**

The Committee observes that clause 3 of the Bill provides for the nomination of three most representative associations but does not explicitly provide the criteria or parameters to be applied in selecting the three most representative associations. The Committee is of the considered view that, while the proposed reforms may enhance efficiency, streamline Council operations, and introduce diversity, they also risk excluding certain art disciplines, each of which possesses unique characteristics and contributions to the sector.

In this regard, the Committee recommends that clause 3 which seeks to repeal and replace section 2(1)(d) be amended to explicitly prescribe the criteria for the selection of representatives. Such criteria should, among other considerations, consider geographic representation, demographic diversity, as well as the experience and expertise of the associations.

##### **iii) Provide for inclusion of the Ministry of Small to Medium Enterprises**

The Committee observes that clause 3 provides for the appointment of four representatives from the Ministries responsible for Tourism; Commerce; Education; and Arts, but excludes the Ministry responsible for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). The Committee notes that the majority of artists and cultural practitioners operate within the micro, small, and medium enterprise (MSME) sector.

The Committee is of the considered view that the inclusion of the Ministry responsible for SMEs would bring critical expertise in the formalisation, financing, and scaling up of creative enterprises. This is particularly important in strengthening the economic viability and sustainability of the arts sector.

In view of the foregoing, the Committee recommends that clause 3 which seeks to amend section 2 (1) (a) be amended to replace the Ministry of Commerce with the Ministry responsible for Small and Medium Enterprises. This amendment will enhance access to business development support, improve outreach to rural artists and craft groups through district-level structures, and strengthen linkages with SME associations nationwide.

**iv) Selection of two Representatives from the Private Sector**

The Committee observes that clause 3 proposes the inclusion of two representatives from the private sector. While this amendment is commendable, the Committee is of the view that the absence of clearly defined selection criteria, coupled with discretionary appointments, may not enhance the operational efficiency of the Council. The Committee is of the view that representation from the private sector should be deliberate and based on demonstratable expertise relevant to the growth and sustainability of the arts sector.

In light of this, the Committee recommends that clause 3 which seeks to amend section 2 (1) (e) be amended to provide for the appointment of two representatives from the private sector, drawn from reputable institutions with a proven track record in resource mobilisation, investment, and strategic partnerships with the arts.

**7.0 CONCLUSION**

The Committee notes that the proposed amendments to the National Arts Council of Zambia (Amendment) Bill, N.A.B. No. 20 of 2026, represent a progressive step towards aligning Zambia's arts governance framework with contemporary standards of efficiency, accountability, and inclusivity.

However, the Committee urges the Executive to carefully consider the concerns and recommendations raised by stakeholders as contained in this Report, in order to strengthen the Bill and enhance its effectiveness.

The Committee contends that subject to the recommended refinements, the Bill will significantly improve governance structures and promote a more inclusive; transparent; and responsive arts sector in Zambia.

We have the honour to be, Madam Speaker, the Committee on Youth, Sport and Child Matters, mandated to consider the National Arts Council (Amendment) Bill, N.A.B. No. 20 of 2026.



Mr Heartson Mabeta, MP  
CHAIRPERSON

May, 2026  
LUSAKA

## **APPENDIX I**

### **LIST OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OFFICIALS**

Mr Charles Haambote, Director of Committees (SC)  
Mrs Chitalu, K Mumba, Deputy Director of Committees (SC)  
Mr Darius Kunda, Senior Committee Clerk (SC-1)  
Mrs Prisca M Shimalungwe , Committee Clerk  
Mr Daniel Lupiya, Senior Committee Assistant  
Mr Muyembi Kantumoya, Committee Assistant  
Ms Taona Chabinga, Committee Assistant  
Ms Derina Mubanga, Intern

## **APPENDIX II**

### **LIST OF WITNESSES**

Ministry of Justice

Ministry of Finance and National Planning

Ministry of Youth, Sports and Child Matters

Ministry of Tourism

Ministry of Education

National Arts Council of Zambia

Zambia Agency for Persons with Disabilities

Zambia National Education Coalition

Zambia Law Development Commission

Zambia Tourism Agency