



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

REPORT

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON CABINET AFFAIRS ON THE MINERALS REGULATION COMMISSION BILL, N.A.B NO. 1 OF 2024

FOR THE

THIRD SESSION OF THE THIRTEENTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

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FOREWORD

Honourable Madam Speaker, the Committee on Cabinet Affairs has the honour to present its Report on the consideration of the Minerals Regulation Commission Bill, N.A.B No. 1 of 2024, for the Third Session of the Thirteenth National Assembly. The Committee is mandated to consider any Bills that may be referred to it by the House, as per Standing Orders 197(m) and 198 of the National Assembly Standing Orders, 2021.

In order to acquaint itself with the ramifications of the Bill, the Committee sought both written and oral submissions from different stakeholders, the list of which is at Appendix II. The Report highlights a summary of submissions from stakeholders; concerns raised by stakeholders; and the observations and recommendations made by the Committee.

Madam Speaker, the Committee is grateful to the stakeholders who tendered both written and oral submissions. The Committee also wishes to thank you, for according it an opportunity to consider the Minerals Regulation Commission Bill, N.A.B No. 1 of 2024. Further, appreciation is extended to the Clerk of the National Assembly and his staff for the support and guidance rendered throughout the Committee's deliberations.

Mr Andrew Zindhlu Lubusha, MP CHAIRPERSON

March, 2024 LUSAKA

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1.0 MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

The Committee consisted of Mr Andrew Zindhlu Lubusha, MP, (Chairperson); Ms Sibeso Sefula, MP, (Vice Chairperson); Dr Christopher Kalila, MP; Mr Oliver Amutike, MP; Ms Given Katuta, MP; Mr Cliff Mpundu, MP; Mr Peter Phiri, MP; Mr Kaliye Mandandi, MP; Mr Elias Musonda, MP; and Mr Newton Samakayi, MP.

2.0 BACKGROUND

The Minerals Regulation Commission Bill, N.A.B. No. 1 of 2024 sought to regulate and monitor the development and management of mineral resources in the Republic; establish the Minerals Regulation Commission and provide for its functions; establish the Mines Appeals Tribunal; and repeal and replace the Mines and Minerals Development Act, 2015.

The *Mines and Minerals Development Act, No. 11 of 2015*, did not adequately provide for, among others, the establishment of the Minerals Regulation Commission; the effective and efficient regulation, monitoring of compliance and carrying out of enforcement activities in the mining sector resulting in challenges such as increase in illegal mining activities, environmental degradation, poor occupational health and safety standards, unsustainable exploration and mining methods as well as loss of Government revenue. Therefore, there was need to repeal and replace the Act to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency in the regulation and monitoring of compliance in the mining sector, and to provide for an effective legal framework to support mineral resource exploration as well as investment by Government in the mining sector.

In light of the above, Minerals Regulation Commission Bill, N.A.B. No. 1 of 2024 was introduced.

3.0 OBJECTS OF THE BILL

The objects of the Bill were to:

- (a) regulate and monitor the development and management of mineral resources in the Republic;
- (b) establish the Minerals Regulation Commission and provide for its functions;
- (c) establish the Mining Appeals Tribunal;
- (d) repeal and replace the Mines and Minerals Development Act, 2015; and
- (e) provide for matters connected with, or incidental to, the foregoing.

4.0 SALIENT PROVISIONS OF THE BILL

The salient features of the Bill were set out below.

Part I: Preliminary Provisions - Clauses 1 to 4

This part of the Bill provided for preliminary provisions, among them, being the definition clause, which sought to define various words and phrases used in the Act in order to make the law easier to understand by the citizens and those tasked to implement the law. It also provided

for the clause which sets out principles that should apply to mining and development of minerals in the Republic.

Part II: The Minerals Regulation Commission – Clauses 5 to 9

This part sought to establish the Minerals Regulation Commission as a body corporate, while clause 6 sets out the functions of the Commission which include among others, to ensure compliance with the Act and Regulations or Rules made in accordance with the Act, and to grant, suspend and revoke mining and non-mining rights, regulate, and monitor the mining industry and ensure orderly exploration of mineral resources.

Clause 7 constituted the Board of the Commission, while clause 8 set out the functions of the Commission which include among others, to promote effective corporate governance of the Commission, and formulate the policies and strategies of the Commission.

Clause 9 provided for the appointment of the Director-General, Secretary, and other staff of the Commission, by the Board of the Commission.

Part V: Regulatory Provisions-Clauses 43 to 59

Clause 43 required a holder of a mining or non-mining right in respect of a conflict mineral or a person in possession of a conflict mineral to obtain a regional certificate from the Commission before disposal of that conflict mineral. The provision further imposed a penalty on a person who contravened the provision, while clause 44 mandated a holder of a mining right or mineral processing licence to obtain and always maintain during the lifetime of the mining right or mineral processing licence, insurance cover within the Republic. The provision further mandated a holder of a mining right or mineral processing licence, if so, directed by the Commission by notice in writing, to obtain and maintain in force in respect of the mining operations carried on by the holder, insurance cover that the Commission may consider reasonably necessary in public interest. The provision further imposed a penalty on a person who contravenes the provision.

Clause 45 sought to provide that a mineral processing licence, and rights conferred by it, shall be subject to the provisions of the Act and the conditions attached to the mining right or mineral processing licence.

Clause 46 mandated a holder of a mining right, where the holder intended to make an amendment to the programme of exploration or mining operations, to apply to the Commission for approval, while clause 47 prohibited a person from transferring, assigning, encumbering, or otherwise dealing with a mining right or mineral processing licence, or an interest in a mining right or mineral processing licence, or an interest in a mining right or mineral processing licence, or an interest in a mining further empowered the Commission to revoke any mining right or mineral processing licence which was transferred, assigned, encumbered, or otherwise dealt with contrary to the provisions of the Act.

Clause 50 empowered the Commission to direct the holder of a mining licence for artisanal and small-scale mining operations, covering contiguous or neighbouring mining areas, to effect such merger or co-ordination within such time and on terms as the Commission shall specify. Clause 51 permitted a holder of a mining right or mineral processing licence who intends to abandon all

or any part of the land to, subject to the mining right or mineral processing licence, apply to the Commission for a certificate of abandonment.

Clause 54 empowered the Commission to suspend or revoke a mining or non-mining right. The provision further sets out grounds upon which the Commission may revoke a mining or non-mining right, which include, among others, where the holder obtained the right by fraud or submission of false information or statements or the holder contravenes the Act, any other written law relating to the right or any terms and conditions of the right. Clause 55 mandated a holder of a mining or non-mining right, where, among others, the holder of a mining or non-mining right terminated the mining right by abandonment, surrender of the mining or non-mining right or other action under this Act, to deliver to the Commission, among others, all records which the holder maintained under the Act with respect to the right, and other documents as the Commission may, by notice given to the holder, require the holder to deliver.

Part VI: Safety, Health, and Environmental Protection – Clauses 60 to 67

Clause 60 mandated the Commission, when deciding whether or not to grant a mining right or mineral processing licence, to take into account, among others, the need to conserve and protect the air, water, soil, flora, fauna, fish, fisheries and scenic attractions, while clause 61 empowered the Minister to prescribe conditions, for the protection of the environment and human health, that a holder of a mining right shall be subject to.

Clause 62 permitted a holder of a mining right or mineral processing licence over land that ceased to be subject to the mining right or mineral processing licence, to cause to be removed from the land, on the surface or underground, any mining or mineral processing plant brought onto, or erected on that land in the course of mining or mineral processing operations carried out under the mining right or mineral processing licence, while clause 63 empowered the Commission, where a mining or mineral processing plant is not removed in accordance with clause 62, to direct that the mining or mineral processing plant be sold by public auction.

Clause 64 empowered the Commission, where the Commission considers that a holder of a mining licence was using wasteful mining practices, to among others, give notice to the holder specifying the particulars of the wasteful mining practices, and request the holder to cease the wasteful mining practices and remedy any damage caused by the practices and suspend the mining operations until the holder took remedial measures. The clause further mandated the Commission to cancel the licence if the holder fails to cease using the wasteful mining practices or to remedy any damage caused by the wasteful mining practices in the notice.

Clause 67 sought to establish an Environmental Protection Fund which shall be administered and managed by the Environmental Protection Fund Committee appointed by the Minister.

Part VII: Mineral Royalties and Charges – Clauses 68 to 75

Clause 68 mandated the Commissioner-General to be responsible for the part of the Act relating to the collection and assessment of mineral royalty, while clause 69 set out the different rates, relating to the payment of mineral royalties on production of minerals, that would be applicable to a holder of a mining licence.

Clause 70 sought to provide that the mineral royalty payable under the Act was due and payable within fourteen days after the end of the month in which the sale of minerals was done. Clause 71 mandated a person required to pay mineral royalty under clause 69 to submit monthly mineral royalty returns within fourteen days after the end of the month in which the sale of the minerals was done.

Clause 75 empowered the Commissioner-General to, where a holder of a mining licence failed to pay a mineral royalty or provisional mineral royalty payable by that holder of the mining licence on or before the due date or any extension thereof allowed by the Commissioner-General, by order served on the holder, prohibit the disposal of any mineral from the mining area concerned, or from any other mining area held by that holder, until an arrangement had been made that was acceptable to the Commissioner-General for the payment of the mineral royalties.

Part VIII: Inspectorate

Clause 76 mandated the Commission to appoint, suitably qualified persons, as inspectors, for purposes of ensuring compliance with this Act, while clause 77 empowered the Minister to make Regulations providing for the powers of inspectors.

Clause 78 mandated an inspector, where there was reason to believe that an offence had been committed, to seize a mineral collected or removed contrary to the provisions of the Act and any tools, instruments, plants, machinery, equipment, vehicles and other property suspected of having been used in the commission of the offence or transportation of the mineral until an order of the court is made regarding the disposal.

Part IX: Mining Appeals Tribunal – Clauses 79 to 87

Clause 79 sought to provide for the establishment of the Mines Appeals Tribunal. Further, the clause granted the Tribunal the jurisdiction to hear and determine, among others, appeals from decisions of the Commission, or a person exercising the functions or powers of the Commission, and proceedings relating to misconduct in the mining industry, while clause 80 set out the compositions, qualifications, and disqualifications of the members of the Tribunal.

Clause 81 provided for the tenure of office of the members of the Tribunal, while clause 82 provided that the expenses and costs of the Tribunal shall be paid out of funds appropriated by Parliament.

Clause 83 empowered the Minister, in consultation with the Judicial Service Commission, to appoint the Registrar of the Tribunal, while clause 84 set out the powers of the Tribunal and further empowered the Chief Justice, by statutory instrument, to make rules relating to, among others, prescribing the forms to be used in proceedings before the Tribunal and issuing of notices for the attendance at, and hearings of, the Tribunal, including time periods.

Part X: General Provisions – Clauses 88 to 98

Clause 88 sought to prohibit the Commission from granting more than five mining rights to a person except where that person was in compliance with the terms and conditions of the mining right granted under the Act and has financial resources to finance additional mining rights.

Clause 89 provided for the imposition of a penalty on a director, manager, shareholder, or partner of a body corporate or unincorporate body, where an offence under the Act is committed with the knowledge, consent or connivance of that director, manager, shareholder, or partner.

Clause 96 empowered the Commission, in the exercise of its functions under the Act, to issue guidelines as are necessary for the better carrying out of the provisions of the Act, while clause 97 empowered the Minister, on the recommendation of the Commission, by statutory instrument, to make Regulations for the better carrying out of the provisions of the Act.

Clause 98 sought to repeal the *Mines and Minerals Development Act, No. 11 of 2015*, and provided for the savings and transitional provisions once the Act was operationalised.

5.0 STAKEHOLDERS' SUBMISSIONS AND CONCERNS

While all stakeholders who appeared before the Committee supported the Bill, some stakeholders expressed some concerns on the provisions highlighted below.

i. *Objects of the Bill*

Some stakeholders were concerned that the Bill did not provide for ownership of minerals by the Zambian people. They were of the view that the Bill should have provided for an additional object to read: "to provide for ownership of minerals." They submitted that the mentioning of the "President" or "Republic" alone in statutes did not carry the people along. They emphasised that minerals should have an absolute owner and to be appropriately regulated, the owner should first be identified. Stakeholders were of the strong view that if the ownership of minerals was not explicitly stated in the objects of the Bill, ordinary Zambians would continue to be excluded from mining activities and would, therefore, not fully benefit as was the prevailing situation.

ii. Clause 2 – Interpretation

Regarding the interpretation of the Bill, under clause 2, stakeholders submitted that the definitions of the various technical words used in the Act such as "license" and "reasonable" were missing. The stakeholders argued that since these two terms had been used in the Bill many times, it would be important to define them.

Stakeholders were also concerned that the meaning of "mineral royalty" in clause 2 was too general adding that this could explain why in the past, the administration of mineral royalty lacked stability and challenging thereby marginally contributing to total revenues.

They contended that the term "mineral royalty" should be re-defined to read as follows:

"the fair value of the mineral asset, as it lies in the ground, which the developer or investor pays as compensation to the owner for a return on investment considering the trade-off benefits between the risks the investor is prepared to accept and those of the owner, as they also accrue to his successors, for the depletion of their inherent mineral asset."

iii. Clause 3 – Minerals to Vest in the President

The Committee was informed that the marginal note for clause 3 of the Bill, should read as "ownership of minerals to vest in the President and opposed to "minerals to vest in the President"." Some stakeholders stated that clause 3(1) alienated the people of Zambia from ownership of their minerals. They contended that existing and future generations were the owners of the land and everything therein.

iv. Clause 5 – Establishment of the Commission

Some stakeholders were concerned that the Bill gave similar functions as those already being performed by the Cadastre and Mining Safety Department in the Ministry of Mines and Minerals Development which might lead to duplication of functions.

v. Clause 6 – Functions of the Commission

Regarding the functions of the Commission, some stakeholders were concerned that they were not comprehensive. They contended that in addition to those already provided for in the Bill, the Commission should also undertake the following functions:

- a) secure a firm basis of comprehensive data collection on national mineral resources and the technologies of exploration and exploitation for national decision making; and
- b) perform such other functions as the Minister may assign to it.

Furthermore, the Commission should also ensure that the laboratories under it's charge for mineral analysis and valuation were accredited to minimise discrepancies, issuance of substandard reports and disputes in general.

vi. Clause 7 – Board of Commission

On the composition of the Board of the Commission, some stakeholders submitted that the Bill omitted key stakeholders such as the traditional leaders which were already provided for in the *Mines and Minerals Development Act, No. 11 of 2015*. They contended that since nearly all mining activities in Zambia were poised to take place on customary land, it would not be appropriate to omit traditional leaders from the Board.

Some stakeholders also contended that since the Minerals Regulation Commission once operational would be monitoring the trading in, and export of, minerals, the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry should be represented on the Board.

The stakeholders were of the opinion that clause 7(2)(d) which provided for the appointment of three representatives without specifying the target institutions was ambiguous. They submitted that it would be important to clearly identify institutions which directly related to the Act as opposed to leaving it open ended.

vii. Clause 14 – Mining right for area subject to other rights

Some stakeholders were concerned that the way clause 14 of the Bill was framed might lead to the conflicts identified hereunder.

- i. Conservation and protection of the air, water, flora, fish and social-economic impact or harm to surrounding communities in or on the mining right would be difficult as issues were transboundary.
- ii. Progressive rehabilitation of the land damaged or adversely affected by exploration operations, mining operations or mineral processing operations would not be shared.
- iii. Conflicts over land to be rehabilitated would then affect the decommissioning costs of the holder of the mining licence, thereby impacting on the contribution to the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF).
- iv. Life of mine of two holders of mining rights would not necessarily be the same and would thus complicate decommission programmes as the holders of mining rights would have different lifespans.

They, therefore, advised that a holder of the mining right should be encouraged to expand to other minerals in his or her lease as opposed to allowing others to take hold.

viii. Clause 22 – Application for mining licence

Some stakeholders were concerned that the period of "within forty-five days of receipt of an application under subsection (1), to grant or reject the application" was too long and as such might discourage investment and promote corruption adding that a grant or rejection of a permit should be within 14 days.

ix. Clause 28 – Amendment of mining licence or mineral processing licence

Some stakeholders submitted that while the inclusion of clause 28(1) in the Bill compelled the holder of the mining license or mineral processing licence to report the discovery of a mineral not included in the license, there were no penalties for failure to do so. They contended that there was need for the inclusion of a provision spelling out the consequences for failure to comply such as payment of a fine regardless of whether the holder had commenced mining or processing the discovered mineral.

x. Clause 67 – Environment Protection Fund

Some witnesses were concerned that the administration and management of the Environmental Protection Fund would be undertaken by the Environmental Protection Fund Committee which would be appointed by the Minister. They explained that the provision had potential to promote political interference. They were of the view that this provision should be recast to read as follows: "there shall be an Environmental Protection Fund which shall be administered and managed by the Minerals Regulation Commission through the Environmental Protection Fund Committee appointed by the Commission in consultation with the Minister".

xi. Clause 80 – Members of the Tribunal

With regards to the composition of the Tribunal, most stakeholders submitted that the provision of five members was inadequate and contrary to the required practice of seven members who should have technical expertise. They were of the view that the number should be increased to seven to align this provision to other tribunals.

6.0 COMMITTEE'S OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

All of the stakeholders who appeared before the Committee supported the Bill but also raised various concerns. The Committee also supports the enactment of the Bill. However, in doing so it makes observations and recommendations outlined below.

- (i) The Committee observes that amongst its objects, the Bill does not provide for the ownership of minerals. In this regard, the Committee recommends that the Bill should provide and explicitly state "to provide for ownership of minerals" as one of the objects.
- (ii) The Committee observes that clause 7(2) provides for the appointment of members of the Commission by the Minister. It is of the view that mining is very strategic to the country and as such, appointment of the Board by the Minister will compromise the operations of the Commission as the Board will be directly reporting to him. In this regard, the Committee recommends that the appointment to the Board of the Commission should be made by the President. The President shall in making an appointment under this clause have regard to the integrity, knowledge, expertise and experience of such persons and in particular his or her knowledge in matters relevant to the functions of the Commission.
- (iii) The Committee observes that, despite mining activities cutting across various interest groups and connected to various sectors through forward and backward linkages, the composition of the Board of the Commission in clause 7(2)(b) is only limited to representatives from the Ministries. This may lead to underrepresentation which can become a source of conflict in future.

In this regard, the Committee urges the Government to broaden the representation of membership to the Board by including stakeholders such as traditional leaders, civil society, the private sector, and other key ministries such as Local Government and Rural Development; and Commerce, Trade and Industry.

(iv) The Committee observes that clause 9(1) states that the Board shall appoint a Director-General who shall be the chief executive officer of the Commission; and responsible for the day-to-day administration of the Commission. Mining in Zambia is a strategic sector and we need to be strategic and deliberate in appointing people in these positions.

In this regard, the Committee strongly recommends that this clause should be re-cast to read "the Commission shall have a Chief Executive Officer who shall be appointed by the President in consultation with the Public Service Commission and the Minister responsible for mines." This will ensure that the chief executive officers will not be manipulated by the Minister.

(v) The Committee observes that clause 3(1) of the Bill provides that minerals wheresoever located in the Republic, shall vest in the President on behalf of the Republic. However, this provision is not consistent with the Lands Act, Chapter 184 of the Laws of Zambia which provides that all land shall vest absolutely in the President for and on behalf of the people of Zambia. The Committee is of the view that the provision in the Bill is ambiguous and as such may lead to different interpretations of the law. It is of the view

that this definition should be consistent with that in the Lands Act, Chapter 184 of the Laws of Zambia.

In this regard, the Committee recommends that clause 3(1) of the Bill should be harmonised with section (3) 1 of the *Lands Act, Chapter 184 of the Laws of Zambia*. To this end, clause 3 (1) should, therefore, be recast to read "all rights of ownership of minerals as they lie in the ground unexplored, unmined, unprocessed and/or in, exploration, mining, processing, disposing of minerals wheresoever located in the Republic, shall be vest in the President *on behalf of the people of Zambia*.

(vi) The Committee observes that clause 7(d) which provides for the appointment of three representatives from the organisations or institutions dealing with matters relating to this Act without specifying institutions or sectors they will represent, is rather ambiguous. Therefore, for avoidance of doubt, the Act should clearly state which organisations or institutions are envisioned to be part of the Board of the Commission to avoid appointment of Board members from organisations or institutions with little significance or no connection in dealing with the Act.

In this regard, the Committee recommends that Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA) which may have been omitted should be added and explicitly mentioned as a permanent member of the Commission. In this regard, a new clause 7(d) should be inserted to read a *"representative of the Zambia Revenue Authority"*. The proposed clause will explicitly add ZRA as one of the permanent institutions represented on the Board of the Commission. This is because in optimising revenue mobilisation from the entire mineral value chain in Zambia, ZRA will heavily rely on the regulatory work of the Commission. Therefore, the Committee is of the view that adding ZRA as permanent representation will bring value to the Commission.

It further recommends that the other two outstanding organisations should be explicitly mentioned as envisioned.

- (vii) The Committee observes that clause 80(1) provides for five members of the Tribunal which is not consistent with the number of members on existing ones. In this regard, the Committee recommends that the number of members of the Tribunal should be increased to seven and that the members should have appropriate technical expertise.
- (viii) The Committee observes that clause 21 provides for licensing of mining activities which is a very important requirement that will form the basis for monitoring compliance and ensure that the country benefits from mining activities taking place in a country. Further, the Committee observes that this clause also positively discriminates in favour of citizens by allowing Zambian citizens only to get involved in artisanal and small-scale mining except under certain circumstances.

In this regard, the Committee recommends that information of monitoring compliance should be shared with the ZRA in order to enhance tax compliance. Further, the Committee urges the Government to ensure that it makes available affordable capital to enable citizens acquire machinery and equipment to facilitate exploration of minerals.

7.0 CONCLUSION

The Committee notes that the current *Mines and Mineral Development Act, No. 11 of 2015* does not adequately provide for among others, the establishment of the Minerals Regulation Commission. It does not also provide for effective and efficient regulation, compliance monitoring and carrying out of enforcement mechanisms in the mining sector resulting in myriad of challenges including illegal mining, unsustainable exploration, mining practices and social conflicts in mining communities.

Considering the above, the Minerals Regulation Commission Bill, N.A.B No. 1 of 2024 will provide for an effective legal and institutional framework aimed at enhancing effectiveness and efficiency in the regulation and compliance monitoring. This will result in unlocking of investment in mineral resource exploration including the entire mineral value chain. To this end, the enactment of the Bill, will contribute significantly to mitigate the challenge of inadequate institutional framework, effectively regulate the mining sector, and thereby contribute to spurring investment for the sector towards the attainment of the country's economic transformation and job creation agenda in line with the 8th National Development Plan.

We have the honour to be, Madam, the Committee on Cabinet Affairs mandated to consider the Minerals Regulation Commission Bill, N.A.B. No. 1 of 2024, for the Third Session of the Thirteenth National Assembly.

Mr Andrew Zindhlu Lubusha, MP CHAIRPERSON

March, 2024 LUSAKA

APPENDIX I – List of National Assembly Officials

Mrs Doreen N C Mukwanka, Director, Social Committees Mrs Chitalu Mumba, Deputy Director, Social Committees Ms Christabel Tawanda Malowa, Senior Committee Clerk (SC1) Mr Darius Kunda, Committee Clerk Ms Carol Ndoti, Committee Clerk Mrs Ruth N Mwiinga, Administrative Assistant Mr Daniel Lupiya, Committee Assistant Mr Muyembi Kantumoya, Parliamentary Messenger

APPENDIX II – List of Witnesses

Ministry of Finance and National Planning Ministry of Justice Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprise Development Ministry of Land and Natural Investment The University of Zambia Zambia Institute for Policy Analysis and Research Zambia Revenue Authority Zambia Chamber of Commerce and Industry Industrial Development Corporation Caritas Zambia Zambia Development Agency Zambia Chamber of Mines Citizens Economic Empowerment Commission Zambia Environmental Management Agency Centre for Trade Policy and Development Maamba Collieries Limited Mr Mwiya Songolo, Member of the Public Mr Heartson Mabeta, Member of Parliament Mr Makweti Sishekanu, Member of the Public