



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON THE
LEAKAGE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL SPEECH
ON THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE FIFTH
SESSION OF THE 11TH NATIONAL
ASSEMBLY**

Office of the Vice President
Cabinet Office
LUSAKA

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT IN PARLIAMENT BY HER HONOUR THE VICE PRESIDENT, MRS INONGE WINA, MP ON THE LEAKAGE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL SPEECH ON THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE FIFTH SESSION OF THE 11TH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Mr. Speaker,

I would like to thank you for granting me this opportunity to issue a ministerial statement to this august House on the leakage of the Presidential Speech for the official opening of the fifth session of the 11th National Assembly. This follows a point of order raised by Chadiza Member of Parliament Honourable Allan Mbewe on the floor of this House on 22nd September, 2015

Mr. Speaker,

The question of leakage of classified information in Government institutions is of grave concern and a really saddening situation. You may wish to note that Public Officers in Ministries, Provinces and other Spending Agencies shoulder heavy responsibility for the welfare of the people of Zambia by helping to maintain the security of the nation. This is done by, among other things, the safe custody of all information and documents relating to Government operations, negotiations and decisions.

Public Officers are bound by the provisions of the Security Instructions document, which set out the guidelines to be observed and the practical steps which must be taken by Public officers to ensure that classified information is not disclosed to unauthorized persons.

Mr. Speaker,

The State Security Act, which is imbedded within the Security Instructions for Government Ministries, is an important piece of Legislation on issues of National Security. The Act states that it is the duty of Permanent Secretaries and Chief Executives to ensure that the contents of the State Security Act are brought to the attention of all public officers under their charge.

There is actually a Declaration of Secrecy form in the Act which requires all Public Officers on first appointment and Officers having access to highly classified documents to sign the said declaration.

Mr. Speaker,

The provisions of the Act make it a clear offence to leak information by stating that

“Any person who has in his possession or under his control any code, password, sketch... or other document...which relates to or is used in a protected place...or which has been made or obtained in contravention of this Act...or entrusted in confidence to him by any person holding office under Government...or which he has had access owing to his position as a person who has held office...or party to a contract with government, and who

- a) Uses the same in any manner or for any purpose prejudicial to the safety or interests of the Republic;
- b) Communicates the same to any person other than a person to whom he is authorized to communicate it...;
- c) Fails to take proper care of, or so conducts himself as to endanger the safety of the same; or
- d) Retains the sketch plan, model, note, document or article in his possession or under his control when he has no right or when it is contrary to his duty so to do...;

shall be guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term of not less than fifteen years but not exceeding twenty-five years.”

Mr. Speaker,

As you can see, State Security, State Secrecy should indeed not be taken lightly both by the Public Officers and those who are in a habit of fishing for highly classified information.

It is regrettable to note that there are some officers who are not adhering to these standard operating guidelines regulating the flow of information. This non-adherence to guidelines could explain the leakage of classified information to unauthorised parties.

Mr. Speaker,

The leakage of the Presidential Speech on the Official Opening of the fifth session of the 11th National Assembly is a very unfortunate occurrence. Consequently, Government has taken the matter very serious and I wish to inform this august House that Government security and investigative wings instituted investigations into the said leakage. The outcome of these investigations will be

revealed to the nation in due course. I will therefore, not divulge any further details on this matter, at this stage.

Mr. Speaker,

I want to take this opportunity to remind all Public Officers of the need for them to abide by the provisions of the Security Instructions document for the Government Ministries as well and the Declaration of Secrecy that they signed when joining the Public Service.

To those who are the habit of shipping classified information to unauthorised parties, your actions will not be taken lightly and serious remedial action will be taken against erring officer. I am also serving notice to the recipients of such information that they too are not free from prosecution if found wanting in accordance with the provisions of the State Security Act.

Mr. Speaker,

More Importantly, I would like to re-instill the spirit of Patriotism to our beloved country by all the Zambian people. Let us all be proud Zambians, safeguarding the interests of the Leadership and the entire country at Large.

Zambia is our home and we all have a duty to make our home a safe and comfortable place to live in. We must remember there is no home without variance in opinions, but this should not be the reason to publicly ridicule and embarrass our leaders and indeed ourselves by being inconsiderate to safety and security rules. Every nation, every home, and every person should enjoy their confidentiality within the confines of the Law.

Mr. Speaker, I Thank you.