

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

ON THE DEPLOYMENT OF THE ZAMBIA INTERGRATED LAND ADMINISTRATION SYSTEM (ZILAS)

BY THE

THE MINISTER OF LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCES (MR MUCHIMA), MP

Madam Speaker, thank you and before I issue my ministerial statement, I wish to convey a message from Her Honour the Acting President, Mrs W.K. Mutale Nalumango. She called me passing greetings to the hon. Members of Parliament that she is in good health and serious convenient with the President. She has no intention to resign and she will never resign. She will die with the party.

Madam Speaker, I wish to take this opportunity to thank you for allowing me to make this ministerial statement on the digitalisation and activation of sixty electronic services of the new Zambia Integrated Land Administration System (ZILAS) in the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources.

Madam Speaker, the Government's agenda on digitalisation aims to ensure that the services provided by various Government institutions are integrated. The Government through the electronic Government division - SMART Zambia Institute continue to allocate resources towards progressive interventions that are evidently enhancing efficiency, effectiveness, productivity, accountability and transparency, thus bringing Government services closer to the people.

Madam Speaker, in line with the digitalisation agenda of the Government, Cabinet in 2020 approved the development and deployment of ZILAS. The system is aimed at enhancing the digitisation of land administration. This was to address the various gaps and challenges of the Commissioned Zambia Integrated Land Management Information System (ZILMIS).

Madam Speaker, allow me to inform this august House that the ZILAS has been deployed and the ministry migrated data from ZILMIS to the new system on Saturday, 13th May, 2023. To that effect, sixty services have been made available on the Government Service Bus (GSB). The new ZILAS went live on 17th May, 2023. This meant that the public could start accessing the sixty services that have been placed online. It further entails that all clients need to open a Zampass account on the Zamportal website to access the services.

Madam Speaker, by introducing digital technology, the ministry is focused on streamlining its operations. These e-services will allow stakeholders to access services online thereby reducing physical contact with the ministry staff and eliminating opportunities for corruption. This will contribute to a reduction in the cost of doing business.

Madam Speaker, we appreciate that we used ZILMIS for nine years from 2014 to 2023. The maintenance contract with the company that developed ZILMIS ended on 31st March, 2022. We had been using the system without a contract and we were at risk in the event of system challenges. The ministry had been using ZILMIS for nine years without enhancements and inclusion of online payment platforms thereby creating a conduit for corruption.

Madam Speaker, ZILAS is better than ZILMIS as it has:

- (a) mandatory fields to fill in for example, gender, phone numbers, date of birth, national registration card number and email address where clients receive automatic notifications;
- (b) the payment platforms are plugged into ZILAS for example, mobile money, online internet banking, visa card, and ZANACO bill muster;
- (c) a performance tracking mechanism that shows how long a member of staff takes to work on a case and if there are delays beyond the ministry service charter, it will change to red for the supervisor to take action;

- (d) role based security feature allowing for segregation of duties;
- (e) audit trail showing the log of events for the users of the system and the services used;
- (f) it is integrated with the Government Service Bus with Ministry of Home Affairs and Internal Security to verify National Registration Card (NRCs), Patent And Company Registration Agency (PACRA) for the company profile to be retrieved once the identity number is captured;
- (g) after ninety days, issued Invitation To Treaty (ITT) will be expired from the system;
- (h) access to the system through the e-filing service on the Zamportal is possible from anywhere and at any time;
- (i) the scanning of each document that is used by the system is digitized whilst still keeping the physical file; and
- (j) availability of an electronic cashbook showing collections disaggregated by province.

Madam Speaker, by adopting digital technologies, the ministry will enhance its data management capabilities thereby improving the accuracy and completeness of information on land administration. Further, the ZILAS is expected to help reduce errors and discrepancies in land ownership and ensure that all stakeholders have access to the most up-to-date information regarding services under the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources.

Madam Speaker, the cut-over to electronic processes involves the adoption of digital tools and systems to manage land and natural resources more effectively. This will include the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to map land and resource locations, digital tools to

manage land ownership and transactions, and online portals to facilitate communication and interaction between the ministry and stakeholders.

The Government is optimistic to ensure that the migration and cleanup process of data of land administration is given the much-needed support by the key stakeholders affected by land issues and these are the citizens of Zambia.

Madam Speaker, there is an assertion by the members of the general public that the ZILAS has crushed. To the contrary, the system is currently operational and the ministry is using it for provision of services.

Madam Speaker, the ministry may be facing teething challenges in the implementation of the new system, however, we are working round the clock to ensure that we continue to provide the services to general public. As a ministry, we are managing this transition phase by phase and all challenges faced are being addressed as a matter of urgency. Amongst the efforts being made is the re-orientation of members of staff, deployment of a team offsite to work on the backlog and the presence of dot.gov (the developer of the system) in the country.

Madam Speaker, to ensure data integrity in the new system, the ministry expects all property owners or their representatives to undertake property information update and cleaning. The data cleaning exercise takes approximately ten minutes. Thereafter, the records can be processed by the back-office staff. Members of the public can also use the e-filing service on the Zamportal to submit their certificates of title and National Registration Cards (NRCs) for data cleaning.

Madam Speaker, the ministry has noted with concern that members of public are apprehensive with the ministry's requirement to clean their data before they can access some of the services. It should be noted that data from the old ZILMIS system is incomplete in some cases as some fields were not mandatory such as gender, date of birth, NRC numbers, phone numbers are missing, others have landlines that were captured a long time ago and are not functional and email addresses were not captured that time.

Madam Speaker, the members of the public stand to benefit more by using the new system. They will be able to; access services anywhere at any time, receive feedback for all actions taken by the ministry through emails and text messages, make online (mobile money, internet banking, and visa) payments for ground rent, consideration fees and other services and receive documents in electronic form such as invitation to treaty, offer letters and many more.

Madam Speaker, the system is a game changer as it will improve service delivery.

I wish to urge all our stakeholders to support this progressive system.

Madam Speaker, finally, I want to appeal to all our clients who submitted documents before the cut-off date of 17th June, 2023 to open up Zampass accounts on the Zamportal and visit the ministry for assistance, so that their documents can continue to be processed.

Madam Speaker, before I sit down. I have a list of the sixty services being offered. We have indicated the ones which are working and those which are work in progress, until we finalise and see that everything is working to perfection.

Madam speaker, I thank you.
