

FRIDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER, 2018

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

ON THE

DEVELOPMENT OF MANTAPALA REFUGEE SETTLEMENT IN LUAPULA

BY THE

HON. MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (MR KAMPYONGO)

Mr Speaker, I sincerely thank you for according me the opportunity to issue a ministerial statement on the Development of Mantapala Refugee Settlement in Luapula Province.

Sir, Mantapala Refugee Settlement was established in response to the influx of refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in August, 2017. The establishment of Mantapala Refugee Settlement is in accordance with the Refugees Act No. 1 of 2017, which requires the Government to secure refugee settlement in Zambia in accordance with the Constitution. The Government, through the generosity of Her Royal Highness Chieftainess Kanyembo, acquired 6,000 ha of land in Mantapala area for settlement of the refugees. The new Mantapala Refugee Settlement can hold up to 20,000 refugees.

Sir, Zambia has since August, 2017, received more than 20,000 refugees from DRC. The Congolese refugees crossed into Zambia through Chienge, Kaputa, Nsumbu, Kipushi, Kakoma, Mokambo, Kasumbalesa and Mpulungu respectively. Mantapala Refugee Settlement is in Nchelenge District and has hosted only 10,000 refugees. This is because some of the refugees were relocated to Maheba and Mayukwayukwa refugee settlements in the North-Western Province and Western Province respectively.

Sir, by the end of August, 2018, the total number of refugees in the country was 74,641. The bulk of the refugees are from DRC, as they accounted for about 54 per cent or about 40,000 of the total number of refugees in the country. The rest of the refugees who constitute about 45 per cent are from Rwanda, Angola, Burundi and other parts of the world.

Sir, after his visit to Kenani Transit Centre in Nchelenge District on 28th October, 2017, His Excellency the President of the Republic of Zambia, Mr Edgar Chagwa Lungu, appointed an

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inter-ministerial steering committee to oversee the development of a new refugee settlement in Luapula Province. It was essential to establish a new refugee settlement in Luapula Province because the refugees were overcrowded in the transit centre as it had limited space and facilities. The inter-ministerial steering committee was made up of Cabinet hon. Ministers drawn from the Office of the Vice-President, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of General Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Community Development and Social Welfare and the provincial administration of Luapula Province. It has since successfully overseen the establishment of Mantapala Refugee Settlement.

Sir, Mantapala Refugee Settlement has been established in accordance with the United Nations (UN) Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework which was launched last year. This is to ensure that the needs of the refugees are addressed in a coordinated and comprehensive manner. My Government is therefore implementing various interventions with a view to ensuring that the livelihoods of the refugees and host communities are sustainable. The framework also ensures that the refugees' responses feed into the broader development programmes and addresses not just the development needs of refugees, but those of the host communities.

Mr Speaker, my Government has had the support of the United Nations (UN) agencies in responding to the needs of the refugees. Accordingly, allow me to take this opportunity to thank the United Nations Country Coordinator, Madam Janet Rogan, United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), World Food Programme (WFP), World Health Organisation (WHO) and International Organisation for Migration (IOM) for the support extended to the refugees. International relief agencies, especially World Vision, Zambia Red Cross and other partners have also been instrumental in addressing the various needs of the refugees including the basic life-saving interventions such as food, clean water, tents and health services.

Mr Speaker, to meet the critical basic needs of refugees, about US \$6.6 million was mobilised under the United Nations Central Emergency Relief Fund (CERF). This money has since been disbursed to various agencies and partners to provide the various basic needs for the refugees at

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Mantapala Refugee Settlement. Works undertaken at the settlement include drilling of boreholes to provide safe water, construction of schools, health and security posts.

Mr Speaker, the successful settlement of refugees at Mantapala, notwithstanding, resource mobilisation for the sustenance of some of the programmes remains a challenge. Construction of roads to and within the settlement, for example, is yet to be completed. In that regard, it should be noted that the road from Nchelenge Central Business District to Mantapala is in a deplorable state. However, I must hasten to mention that the Government has since responded and the National Road Fund Agency (NRFA) has disbursed some funds which will be allocated to this very important road. As a result, service providers are forced to use a longer route through Kawambwa to provide and supply requisites to the Mantapala Refugee Settlement.

Sir, there is, therefore, urgent need to repair the Nchelenge/Mantapala Road to improve access and ensure efficient delivery of requisites and services. Owing to limited resources, my Government cannot develop Mantapala Refugee Settlement without the support of other stakeholders, including the international community and the private sector. I must therefore, appeal to the international community, the private sector, humanitarian organisations and indeed, all people of goodwill to work with my Government and ease the suffering of the refugees by providing essential infrastructure and services to the Mantapala Refugee Settlement.

Mr Speaker, I thank you.