

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT
ON THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL TITLING PROGRAMME
BY THE HON. MINISTER OF LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCES, MS KAPATA

Mr Speaker, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to issue a ministerial statement to this august House on the progress towards the implementation of the National Land Titling Programme (NLTP).

Sir, when I delivered the Policy Statement to this august House seeking support for my ministry's 2018 Budget, I indicated that the implementation of the NLTP was a key priority in 2018. The objective of the NLTP is to regularise ownership of untitled properties in towns and cities and promote security of tenure for property owners on state land.

Mr Speaker, the benefits of implementing the programme include guaranteed security of tenure, reduced displacements, enhanced internal security, increased revenue base and investment in the country thereby contributing to socio-economic development. In addition, titled properties can be included on the property registers and valuation roll of respective councils.

Mr Speaker, my ministry is making steady progress towards the realisation of the 2018 target of processing and issuing 300,000 certificates of title. Some of the measures that have been undertaken to date include the following:

- (a) identification of the sites and properties to contribute to the target of 300,000 certificates of title in 2018. Before a property is registered and issued with a certificate of title, there are a number of conditions that must be met. For instance, the property location, size, boundaries and type must be known and the owner to whom the title shall be made must also be known.

Therefore, in the first and second quarter of 2018, the interim project management team on National Titling, working in collaboration with the stakeholders such as the Resettlement Department under the Office

of the Vice-President as well as the Department of Physical Planning under the Ministry of Local Government have been undertaking the process of property identification and verification. This is what has given the ministry a total of 300,121 certificates of title to be issued in 2018.

Sir, you may further wish to note that sixteen councils in Lusaka, the Copperbelt, Central and the Southern Provinces have also been brought on board to participate in the identification of sites in their jurisdictions that should be titled.

Mr Speaker, I wish to report that 300,121 properties have been identified and are at various stages in the registration process. These include properties under resettlement areas, areas surveyed through the Land Development Fund and in council areas. Activities such as verification of property boundaries, social surveys to verify details of property owners, surveying of unsurveyed properties are some of the tasks of focus to ensure that the properties are registered in line with the targets.

Sir, collaboration with the Resettlement Department has been positive. There are 44,577 farms under resettlement areas, and the department has provided settler registers for 7,036 surveyed properties which should be issued with certificates of title by the end of July, 2018. Work shall continue so that as many properties under this category are ready for titling. Therefore, in the first and second quarter of 2018, about 3,000 certificates of title have been produced under the programme.

Therefore, in the first and second quarters of 2018, about 3,000 certificates of title have been produced under the programme.

Mr Speaker, my ministry appreciates the concerns that shall be raised regarding the current performance against the target. The contributing challenges have been identified and are being addressed. For instance, challenges in the existing legal framework are being addressed to make them favourable for the successful implementation of a mass titling programme.

Sir, other challenges experienced are the delays by councils to submit recommendations to the Commissioner of Lands for the land to be allocated to applicants. This is of particular

concern in the sites where surveys were conducted under the Land Development Fund for councils to offer land, especially in newly created districts. I would, therefore, like to take this opportunity to urge hon. Members of this august House to sensitise councils and their constituencies on the National Titling Programme so that the land can be registered for the benefit of the communities.

In relation to the creation of a National Titling Centre, the rehabilitation of the structure which shall function as the National Titling Centre has been completed. The structure is located within Lusaka Show Grounds. I am happy to inform this august House that the National Titling Centre was launched on Thursday, 5th July, 2018. The members of the interim project team on national titling shall now take up full occupancy of the premises and dedicate their time to working on the programme. With this development, progress should be speeded up as there shall be a dedicated cadre of staff working away from the ministry head quarters and focusing on activities related to the National Land Titling Programme.

Sir, in relation to improvement of the Zambia Integrated Land Management Information System (ZILMIS) to enhance processing and issuance of certificates of title ZILMIS is the ministry's information technology (IT) based land management information system that facilitates, among other things, land allocation and registration. Due to the huge volume of land related transactions on account of the National Land Titling Programme, improvements are being made to ZILMIS to enhance its functionality. Following the signing of a contract with a systems developer in February 2018, various software upgrades and enhancements are already in progress. Some of the key enhancements to the system that shall contribute to speedy implementation of the National Land Titling Programme are the automated workflow processes and automated printing of certificates of title with a digital signature of the Commissioner of Lands.

Mr Speaker, as previously alluded to, the National Land Titling Programme is also meant to contribute to the Government's non-tax revenue base. Therefore, in order to enhance the revenue collection, features to create interfaces with banks and other payment platforms such as mobile money are also part of the upgrades. These shall allow the clients to conduct transactions such as querying or paying bills without having to go the ministry or the banks to deposit money. The timeline to complete these innovations is the end of August, 2018.

Sir, in conclusion, my ministry is committed to the implementation of this very important national programme and shall strive to work very hard in the remaining part of the year to ensure its success.

I thank you, Sir.