

RECENT RITUAL KILLINGS REPORTED IN MATERO CONSTITUENCY OF
LUSAKA

The Minister of Home Affairs (Mr Kampyongo)

Mr Speaker, I am grateful for according me an opportunity to issue a Ministerial Statement on an emotive matter of the recent ritual killings reported in Matero Constituency of Lusaka.

Sir, the security situation in Matero Constituency was generally stable until 21st October, 2017 when the first suspected ritual killing was reported to the Zambia Police Service. Between 21st October, 2017 and 24th February, 2018, seven suspected ritual killings were reported to the Zambia Police Service. The victims in all the seven cases have been males aged between twenty-five and forty years old. Furthermore, all the victims in the suspected ritual killings have been found with chests ripped open and some internal body parts missing. The bodies were being found between 0500 and 0600 hours in the early morning by members of the public who immediately reported these matters to the police.

Sir, the police visited and processed all the crime scenes. Preliminary findings suggest that the assailants behind these gruesome killings used the same methods of killing. At every scene, for example, a concrete block has been found. The police believe that the concrete blocks found on the scene could have been used as part of the weapons. The ripping of the chest, cutting of the ears and the private parts, also appeared to have been conducted in a similar manner. Preliminary findings suggest that these murders have been carried out by the same group.

Sir, to bring to book the perpetrators of these barbaric crimes, Zambia Police Services has instituted investigations which have so far resulted in the arrest of the suspect who seems to be the mastermind. The suspect is assisting the police with investigations. By 24th February, 2018, the Zambia Police Service Investigating Team had with the help of the suspect recovered suspected cooked human heart and liver. The suspect also led the investigation team to the recovery of ears and private parts which have since been submitted to the forensic laboratory for examination. The investigations are still going on and the suspect is scheduled to appear in court soon.

Mr Speaker, to curb the spite of the suspected ritual murders, the Zambia Police Service has taken a number of measures to enhance security in Matero Constituency, in particular, and the country at large. Among the measures taken are the following:

- (i) enhanced foot and motorised patrols;
- (ii) increased police presence in high density townships;
- (iii) enhanced sensitisation of the general public on personal security; and
- (iv) enforcement of the law on timely closure of drinking and entertainment places in these areas.

Mr Speaker, the suspected ritual killings are to some extent a result of false beliefs promoted by some traditional healers and herbalists, who claim that the use of human body parts in rituals can help one accumulate wealth. These false beliefs have no place in Zambia, and I must therefore, warn the perpetrators of these vices that the long arm of the law shall catch up with them.

Sir, allow me to appeal to the members of the public to stay calm, as the Zambia Police Services is working around the clock to bring the culprits to book. Members of the public should also cooperate with the police by reporting persons involved in any suspicious activities. Furthermore, members of the public should desist from taking the law into their own hands. We must exercise patience and allow the law enforcement officers to do their work without undue pressure.

Mr Speaker, allow me to commend the Zambia Police Service for the headway made in the on-going investigations. Let me also commend Councillor Salubusa of Kapwepwe Ward, in Matero Constituency for his initiative of “Know Your Neighbour, which is supplementing the efforts of the Zambia Police Service in community sensitisation and crime control. Finally, let me assure the nation that the security situation in the country is stable and people should continue conducting their business normally.

I thank you, Mr Speaker.