

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**  
**BY THE**  
**MINISTER OF TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCE (MR MUTATI), MP**  
**ON THE**  
**THE CONSTRUCTION OF MOBILE COMMUNICATION TOWERS**

Madam Speaker, I wish to thank you for giving me the opportunity to render a ministerial statement on the construction of mobile communication towers.

Madam Speaker, the Government recognizes the critical role that Information and Communication Technology (ICT) such as mobile communication towers plays in accelerating social economic growth and development. In order to build a digital economy, mobile communication towers plays a pivotal role in ensuring that the required ICT based services reach our people in an effective and efficient manner. The increase in ICT uptake demonstrates that our people are ready to adapt, adopt and utilize ICT based services in this country. However, the current mobile communication towers are not sufficient to support the required ICT services and demands. We owe our people through their hon. Members of Parliament answers and solutions to the communication services challenges our people are facing. To this effect, the Government has plans to construct mobile communication towers in all parts of the country to ensure enhanced communication coverage to all underserved and unserved areas.

Madam Speaker, to achieve the 96 per cent target mobile communication coverage by population articulated in the 8th National Development Plan (8NDP), my ministry is proceeding methodically with purpose delivering outcomes that will improve the lives of our people, communities and businesses. To this effect, my ministry has undertaken the following:

- (a) a countrywide digital infrastructure gap analysis, which include mobile communications towers was completed in 2022. This was conducted in order to establish the digital infrastructure connectivity gaps in underserved and unserved areas across the country;

- (b) the gap analysis report was shared with all hon. Members of Parliament for input on priority areas. I wish to thank all hon. Members of Parliament for their cooperation and input. It made our work easier to plan the roll-out of mobile communication towers;
- (c) following the prioritisation of hon. Members of Parliament, surveys of the nominal sites were conducted to obtain the actual coordinates of the proposed locations where towers will be installed;
- (d) in this regard, the survey data will be used as input for the procurement process that will commence in the next two months. Currently, a procurement process for thirty-one mobile communications towers project is in progress.

Madam Speaker, Government in collaboration with private sector will construct a total of 300 mobile communication towers in unserved and underserved areas in 2023.

Madam Speaker, to enhance mobile communication coverage and improve quality of service and experience, the Government will also use a combination of innovative solutions. The countrywide roll out of mobile communication towers shall provide the following benefits to our people:

- (a) reduced cost of travelling and doing business due to enhanced mobile communication services;
- (b) online registration and online payment of businesses and filing of annual performance returns;
- (c) online registration and online payment of cooperatives and filing of annual performance returns;

- (d) online registration of clubs and societies and filing of annual performance returns;
- (e) online filing and payment of ground rent;
- (f) online registration of motor vehicles and vehicle licensing such as road tax;
- (g) FSIP Messaging (sms) notifications and alerts;
- (h) mobile notifications using short messaging service (sms);
- (i) digital payments of social cash transfer using mobile money;
- (j) online Zambia Revenue Authority Tax and Customs filing and payments; and
- (k) for our people to simply say 'hello, how are you doing' will be made easier.

Madam Speaker, as I conclude, I wish to assure the people through this august House, that the Government working in partnership with the private sector and it is committed to rolling out mobile communication towers using appropriate technologies. The mobile communication towers, Madam Speaker, shall have both voice and internet which will enable citizens to experience quality, affordable communication and effective electronic services.

Madam Speaker, I thank you.

---