

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT
ON THE
VIOLENCE ON PF CADRES BY ALLEGED UPND CADRES
BY THE
HON. MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS AND INTERNAL SECURITY (MR MWIIMBU)
MP

Madam Speaker, thank you for according me this opportunity to make my first ministerial statement on the Floor of this House.

Madam Speaker, with your permission, I would like to congratulate the President of the Republic of Zambia, President Hakainde Hichilema, for the resounding victory that he achieved on behalf of the people of Zambia on 12th August, 2021. It was a long, hazardous journey, but against all odds, President Hakainde managed to win the election as President of the Republic of Zambia.

Madam Speaker, I would also like to congratulate his running mate, Madam Mutale Nalumango for being elected the Vice-President of the Republic of Zambia. The Vice-President endured a lot of abuse and threats to her life. In particular, her life was threatened when her helicopter was almost brought down in Shiwang'andu Constituency. However, she never gave up and managed to become the Vice-President of the Republic of Zambia.

Madam Speaker, allow me also to congratulate you on your ascendancy to the position of Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Zambia. You have done the nation of Zambia proud by being the first female Speaker of the National Assembly of Zambia. Congratulations, Madam Speaker. I would also like to congratulate the First Deputy Speaker and the Second Deputy Speaker for winning their seats as deputy speakers of the House.

Madam Speaker, I thank you for according me this opportunity to issue a ministerial statement on the point of order raised by Hon. Stephen Kampyongo, Member of Parliament for Shiwang'andu Constituency on the violence against Patriotic Front (PF) cadres by alleged United Party for National Development (UPND) cadres.

Madam Speaker, the Constitution of the Republic of Zambia under Part III Article 11(b) provides for the freedom of conscience, expression, assembly, and movement and association. Further, during the ceremonial opening of the First Session of the Thirteenth National Assembly, His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Zambia, Mr Hakainde Hichilema, made it clear that the UPND Government does not condone any form of violence. It is in this regard that the new dawn administration is anchored on the rule of law.

As we endeavour to provide for the people of Zambia, we shall ensure that the rights of the people are protected in the country. We shall guarantee security, fundamental human rights, and civil liberties for all irrespective of their political affiliation. The bedrock of the new dawn administration is a conducive governance environment for our country's political stability, security, economic growth and sustainable development.

Madam Speaker, in the recent past, the Government has noted with great concern that some people have been attacking fellow citizens, particularly those who belong to other political parties. This vice is criminal and must come to an end. The violent attacks do not only breach peace in the country but also contravene the provisions of the law. The law clearly stipulates that any person attacking any other person commits an offence. The new dawn Government considers peace as the greatest asset to foster socio-economic development, and it is in this regard that His Excellency, Mr Hakainde Hichilema, the President of the Republic of Zambia, instructed all cadres across the party divide to stop any form of violence.

Madam Speaker, with regard to specific cases raised by the hon. Member of Parliament for Shiwang'andu Constituency, I would like to give brief facts as follows. Firstly, in the case of Hon. Chisopa, the Member of Parliament for Mkushi North Constituency, the brief facts are that during the campaign period, the Zambia Police Service in Mkushi received reports of assault and malicious damage to property. It was alleged that the PF candidate who is now the hon. Member of Parliament had assaulted some members of the opposition party then, the UPND.

Madam Speaker, the Zambia Police Service instituted investigations into this matter. On 17th September, 2021, Hon. Chisopa appeared before the courts of law in Mkushi District to hear the petition of his election.

After the court session, the hon. Member of Parliament was apprehended at Dada's Company near Mkushi Town Centre over the cases reported during the campaign period. The hon. Member was formally charged and arrested on 17th September, 2021 on one count of malicious damage to property and four counts of assault cases. He has been released on police bond and will appear in court soon.

Madam Speaker, secondly, with regard to the case of the Kabwe Municipal Council Mayor, on 9th September, 2021, the mayor-elect was due to appear before the court on the election petition case. On that particular day, the mayor went into the court premises driving the official mayoral vehicle. This act raised concern among UPND sympathisers that the mayor-elect was not in order to drive the official mayoral vehicle as he was not yet installed. This caused confusion at the court premises. The police quickly moved in and restored order.

Madam Speaker, thirdly, for the case of alleged unruly UPND cadres ambushing the PF Secretariat, brief facts of the matter are that on 20th September, 2021, suspected UPND cadres attempted to launch an attack on the PF Secretariat. The intended attack was thwarted by alert police officers.

Madam Speaker, fourthly, on the case of alleged UPND cadres attacking innocent people in Lusaka Town Centre and Kamwala trading areas, facts of the matter are that on 20th September, 2021, around 1000 hours, alleged UPND cadres attacked innocent people and traders in Lusaka Town Centre and Kamwala trading areas and targeted the shops owned by suspected PF cadres. Police officers rushed to the scene to control the situation, and in the process, a police officer was injured. So far, fourteen suspects have been arrested and investigations in the matter are still going on.

Madam Speaker, lastly, with regard to the stripping of a woman in Chilenje by alleged UPND cadres, I wish to inform the House that this particular case has not been reported at any of our police stations. Let me urge the public to report such cases to the police rather than only sharing them with the press. Let me urge the Zambia Police Service to expeditiously bring all those involved to book regardless of political affiliation. The Government of the UPND detests any kind of violence.

Madam Speaker, to curb the violence, the Zambia Police Service has put in place some measures aimed at ensuring that violence in all its forms comes to an end. Some of these measures include the following:

- (a) engaging stakeholders on the importance of unity regardless of political, religious and ethnic groupings to avoid loss of life and damage to property;
- (b) sensitising the general public on the importance of upholding law and order;
- (c) enhancing intelligence information gathering; and
- (d) enhanced foot and motorised patrols by the Zambia Police Service particularly in high crime-prone areas.

Madam Speaker, in concluding my statement, let me warn all those in the habit of perpetuating violence, especially political party cadres that they are not exempt from the provisions of the law. Anyone who breaches the provisions of the law will be dealt with regardless of political affiliation.

Madam Speaker, to all members of various political parties, let me urge you to desist from any acts of violence. Violence will tarnish the good standing of the country, and those found wanting will be dealt with like any other criminals. To the general citizens, let me appeal to you all to report any suspicious persons or groupings intending to attack others to the Zambia Police

Service to ensure that you get protection. Let us embrace unity anchored on the rule of law. Let me urge all peace-loving citizens to abide by the provisions of the law.

Madam Speaker, I thank you.
