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REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND ARTS

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT DELIVERED BY THE MINISTER OF  
TOURISM AND ARTS HON. JEAN KAPATA, MP ON THE  
TRANSFORMATION OF THE ZAMBIA WILDLIFE AUTHORITY  
(ZAWA) INTO A GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT UNDER THE  
MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND ARTS.

MARCH 2015

**MR. SPEAKER,**

I THANK YOU FOR GIVING ME THIS OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT A MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON THE TRANSFORMATION OF ZAMBIA WILDLIFE AUTHORITY (ZAWA) INTO A GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT UNDER THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND ARTS.

IN ORDER TO FULLY APPRECIATE THE ENORMITY OF THE TASK OF WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT, ALLOW ME MR SPEAKER TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ON THE GEOGRAPHICAL SPREAD OF THE PROTECTED AREA SYSTEMS WHICH FALL UNDER THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ZAWA. THIS WILL BE FOLLOWED BY THE REASONS THAT LED TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ZAWA FROM A GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT INTO A SEMI-AUTONOMOUS STATUTORY BODY; ITS OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES FROM INCEPTION AND FINALLY THE REASONS THAT LED TO THE CURRENT POLICY REVERSAL.

**MR SPEAKER**

ZAMBIA'S WILDLIFE PROTECTED AREAS INCLUDES TWENTY (20) NATIONAL PARKS, 36 GAME MANAGEMENT AREAS (GMAs), ONE BIRD SANCTUARY AND TWO WILDLIFE SANCTUARIES TOTTALLING AN AREA OF 236,376 SQAURE KILOMETRES WHICH IS EQUIVALENT TO 31.4 PERCENT OF THE COUNTRY'S TOTAL LAND MASS.

THE PROTECTED AREAS WERE ESTABLISHED TO PLAY AN IMPORTANT ECOLOGICAL FUNCTION SUCH AS CONSERVATION AND REGULATION OF WATER THROUGH PROTECTION OF WATER CATCHMENT AREAS AND MITIGATION OF CLIMATE CHANGE EFFECTS. IN ADDITION, PROTECTED AREAS ARE HABITAT TO WILDLIFE SPECIES, SOME OF WHICH ARE UNIQUE TO ZAMBIA SUCH AS KAFUE LECHWE IN THE KAFUE FLATS AND BANGWEULU SWAMPS. IN ADDITION TO THEIR ECOLOGICAL FUNCTIONS, PROTECTED AREAS ARE CURRENTLY THE MAIN BASIS FOR ZAMBIA'S TOURISM INDUSTRY AND A MAJOR SOURCE OF EMPLOYMENT. THIS THEREFORE MAKES THE PROTECTION OF WILDLIFE ESTATES AND THE RELATED BIODIVERSITY A PUBLIC GOOD, REQUIRING SPECIAL ATTENTION FROM THE GOVERNMENT.

**MR SPEAKER**

AS THE HOUSE MAY BE AWARE, ZAWA WAS CREATED BY THE ZAMBIA WILDLIFE ACT NO. 12 OF 1998 AS PART OF THE OVERALL PUBLIC SERVICE REFORMS IMPLEMENTED WITHIN THE OVERALL GOVERNMENT POLICY OF ECONOMIC LIBERALISATION IN THE 1990s THAT WERE PREMISED ON EFFICIENCY IN THE DELIVERY OF PUBLIC SERVICES. IT WAS GOVERNMENT POLICY THEN, TO HIVE OFF CENTRAL GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONS ESPECIALLY THOSE THAT WERE DEEMED TO BE COMMERCIALY VIABLE TO BE

MANAGED BY SEMI-AUTONOMOUS STATUTORY AGENCIES. THE KEY ASSUMPTIONS THEN WERE THAT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT WOULD BE CARRIED OUT MORE EFFICIENTLY AND WOULD GENERATE REVENUE FOR ITS OPERATIONS AND ALSO CONTRIBUTE THE SURPLUS TO THE TREASURY.

**MR. SPEAKER,**

PRIOR TO THIS POLICY DECISION, THE RESPONSIBILITY OF WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT WAS UNDER A GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT CALLED THE NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE SERVICES UNDER THE THEN MINISTRY OF TOURISM. THE DEPARTMENT'S PERFORMANCE IN MANAGING THE COUNTRY'S VAST WILDLIFE ESTATES WAS LESS THAN SATISFACTORY DUE MAINLY TO LIMITED FUNDING FROM THE TREASURY WHICH LED TO THE DETERIORATION OF THE WILDLIFE ESTATES THROUGH ENCROACHMENT AND UNPRECEDENTED REDUCTION IN WILDLIFE SPECIES AS A RESULT OF POACHING.

THE CREATION OF A WELL CAPITALISED AGENCY THAT WOULD GENERATE AND RETAIN REVENUE FOR ITS OPERATIONS INSTEAD OF DEPENDING SOLELY ON THE NATIONAL TREASURY FOR ITS OPERATIONS WAS PERCEIVED AS THE LONG TERM SOLUTION TO ADDRESSING THE SUB SECTOR'S CHRONIC FINANCIAL CHALLENGES.

**MR SPEAKER,**

THE IDEA OF ESTABLISHING AN AGENCY TO MANAGE WILDLIFE WAS WELL RECEIVED BY MANY STAKEHOLDERS INCLUDING THE COOPERATING PARTNERS PARTICULARLY THE EUROPEAN UNION WHO FUNDED ALL THE STUDIES THAT WERE CARRIED OUT TO ASSESS THE FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING ZAWA. A BUSINESS PLAN WAS DEVELOPED THAT INFORMED THE CAPITALISATION OF THE INSTITUTION. THE EUROPEAN UNION (EU) THROUGH THE EUROPEAN DEVELOPMENT FUND (EDF) HAD PLEDGED TO INJECT NOT LESS THAN US\$ 20 MILLION PER YEAR TO FUND ZAWA'S INITIAL OPERATIONS, INCLUDING FULLY FUNDING A CAPITALISATION PLAN FOR FIELD EQUIPMENT, VEHICLES, AIRCRAFT, FIREARMS, BUILDING OF STAFF HOUSES AND CAMPS AND PROCUREMENT OF GRADERS FOR MAINTENANCE OF ROADS IN THE NATIONAL PARKS. HOWEVER, DISAGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE CONTRACTING PARTIES ON IMPLEMENTATION MODALITIES RESULTED IN THE EU PULLING OUT LEAVING THE INSTITUTION WITH NO START-UP CAPITAL.

**MR. SPEAKER,**

DESPITE THE NON FULFILLMENT OF THE PLEDGED SUPPORT BY THE EU, THE GOVERNMENT DID NOT MOVE IN EARLY ENOUGH TO FILL THE CAPITAL FUNDING GAP LEFT BY THE EU. INSTEAD THE

INSTITUTION CONTINUED TO BE PROVIDED WITH MINIMAL GRANTS WHICH AVERAGED K4 BILLION (OLD CURRENCY) PER ANNUM WHICH FUNDS WERE ONLY ADEQUATE TO PAY SALARIES FOR STAFF AND MEET SOME OPERATIONAL COSTS. IN ESSENCE, NOTHING HAD CHANGED IN TERMS OF FUNDING OTHER THAN THE CHANGE OF NAME AND STRUCTURE OF THE ORGANISATION.

**MR SPEAKER,**

THE LACK OF START-UP CAPITAL INVESTMENT ALSO UNDERMINED THE WILDIFE SECTOR'S CAPACITY TO RAISE ADEQUATE REVENUES AND SUSTAIN ITS OPERATIONS INCLUDING THE PRIMARY FUNCTION OF PROTECTING OUR WILDIFE RESOURCES. AS THE SITUATION WORSENERD TO A LEVEL WHERE ZAWA FAILED TO MEET ITS OBLIGATIONS, THE GOVERNMENT FROM 2011 TO 2013 AGREED TO COMMENCE THE CAPITAISATION OF ZAWA. CONSEQUENTLY, THE TREASURY RELEASED A TOTAL SUM OF ZMW 11,137,710, ZMW 15,671,733 AND ZMW 18,614,208 IN 2011,2012 AND 2013 RESPECTIVELY. HOWEVER, THIS FUNDING WAS FAR BELOW THE REQUIRED CAPITALISATION WHICH REQUIRED FUNDING OF US\$20 MILLION PER YEAR FOR AN INITIAL FIVE YEAR PERIOD.

**MR SPEAKER**

OVER THE YEARS, THE PROBLEMS OF INADEQUATE WILDLIFE PROTECTION COUPLED WITH INSUFFICIENT NUMBERS OF WILDLIFE POLICE OFFICERS AND POORLY MAINTAINED PARK INFRASTRUCTURE RESULTED IN ENCROACHMENT OF NATIONAL PARKS WHICH IN TURN LED TO INCREASED POACHING, LOSS OF SPECIES DIVERSITY AND REDUCED ANIMAL POPULATIONS.

THE HOUSE MAY WISH TO NOTE THAT TO EFFECTIVELY PATROL THE COUNTRY'S WILDLIFE ESTATE AT OPTIMAL LEVELS, A TOTAL OF 3,500 WILDLIFE POLICE OFFICERS ARE NEEDED. ZAWA CURRENTLY ONLY EMPLOYS 1,250 WHICH IS LESS THAN HALF THE NUMBER REQUIRED. IN ORDER TO MITIGATE THE STAFF SHORTAGE, IT WAS PLANNED THAT 750 WILDLIFE POLICE OFFICERS WOULD BE RECRUITED AS PART OF THE PLAN TO RAISE THE NUMBER OF ZAWA PERSONNEL TO REACH THE OPTIMUM LEVEL IN THE SHORT TO MEDIUM TERM. THE PLAN WAS HOWEVER DEFERRED DUE TO STAFF RECRUITMENT FREEZE IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE.

**MR SPEAKER,**

IN ADDITION TO THE CHALLENGES OF INADEQUATE MANPOWER, THE UNFAVOURABLE FINANCIAL POSITION OF ZAWA SINCE 1999, MEANT THAT ZAWA HAD ACCUMULATED A DEBT BURDEN OF

ZMW 8,063,041,583 (ABOUT K 8 BILLION IN TODAY'S CURRENCY) AS AT JULY 2014 THROUGH NON REMITTANCE OF STATUTORY OBLIGATIONS TO ZRA AND NAPSA; WORKERS COMPENSATION; TRADE CREDITORS; FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS INCLUDING OTHER CREDITORS INCLUDING UNREMITTED REVENUES FROM SAFARI AND RESIDENT HUNTING TO LOCAL COMMUNITIES THAT ASSISTS WITH THE CO-MANAGEMENT OF THE WILDLIFE ESTATES.

**MR SPEAKER,**

THE LIMITED REVENUE GENERATION CAPACITY OF THE INSTITUTION IMPLIED THAT EVEN IF GOVERNMENT WERE TO ASSIST ZAWA TO PAY OFF ITS STATUTORY DEBT, THE INSTITUTION WOULD STILL FALL BACK INTO THE DEBT TRAP. THE HOUSE MAY WISH TO NOTE THAT FAILURE BY ZAWA TO PAY COMMUNITIES THEIR SHARE OF WILDLIFE REVENUE MEANT THAT ZAWA LOST THE CONFIDENCE OF ITS KEY PARTNERS IN WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT NAMELY THE CHIEFS AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES WHO BY LAW WERE EXPECTED TO ASSIST THEM TO CONSERVE AND PATROL THE VAST WILDLIFE ESTATES.

**MR. SPEAKER,**

IN A BID TO ADDRESS THE MANY PROBLEMS THAT ZAWA FACED, THE MOST ACCEPTABLE OPTION THAT WAS AVAILABLE WAS TO REVERT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT TO GOVERNMENT BY THE