

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT
ON THE
STATEMENT ON THE MISSING EQUIPMENT AT THE ZAMBIA MEDICINES AND
MEDICAL SUPPLIES AGENCY (ZAMMSA)
BY THE
THE MINISTER OF HEALTH (MRS MASEBO), MP

Madam Speaker, thank you for according me this opportunity to render the ministerial statement on the matter of urgent public importance raised by Mr Kapyanga, Member of Parliament for Mpika Parliamentary Constituency regarding the medical equipment and drugs worth millions of Kwachas that were allegedly stolen at the Zambia Medicines and Medical Supplies Agency (ZAMMSA) offices. The brief facts of the matter are that no medicines have gone missing or stolen from ZAMMSA warehouse. However, the House may wish to note that various dental equipment and assorted computed tomography CT-Scan accessories were allegedly removed or stolen from a classified government warehouse at the airport, and not from a ZAMMSA warehouse.

Madam Speaker, the actual date of the theft is still unknown. However, it is believed that this may have taken place between 2018 and January, 2023.

Madam Speaker, this matter has since been reported to the Zambia Police Service and is currently under investigation. The House and the general public will be informed once investigations have been concluded.

Madam Speaker, as my hon. Colleagues on your left are making mocking sounds, it is, indeed, right for them to make those sounds because a theft cannot take place in five years.

So, Madam Speaker, as a ministry we tried to obtain further information concerning the incident, especially that the matter is under police investigation and, therefore, there are certain aspects that we may not at this point disclose on the Floor of the House for fear of jeopardising investigations. Suffice to say, the chairperson of ZAMMSA led a team of officers to the

warehouse to check on the equipment kept there after the theft was reported, more so considering that it happened at such a secure place. Details are that the theft was actually an inside job because whoever store collected all the dental equipment and the accessories. Yet, the keys are kept by a designated officer at ZAMMSA.

Madam Speaker, the warehouse is only visited during stock take, and it is during that time that the loss was discovered. There was a claim at the time that the matter had been reported to the police. However, when the police were taken to the warehouse, they refuted having ever received the report.

Madam Speaker, the equipment at the warehouse in question was bought in 2018 for the specialised unit still under construction at the University Teaching Hospital (UTH).

Why this equipment was bought six years earlier for works still underway on the unit is not understood.

Madam Speaker, there is a brand-new CT scan and X-ray machine together with all the accessories in stock, currently, at that warehouse, and hon. Members may wish to note that the Ministry of Health has since directed ZAMMSA to move this equipment to UTH as soon as possible to prevent any more theft. In the meantime, the police are investigating the matter, and once more information has been given, the public will be informed through this House.

I thank you, Madam Speaker.
