



Republic of Zambia

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT DELIVERED BY HON. KAPEMBWA SIMBAO, MP,
MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS ON THE STATUS OF WATER
TRANSPORT SECTOR IN ZAMBIA**

November 2015

Mr. Speaker,

I wish to thank you most sincerely for granting me this opportunity to make a Ministerial Statement on the state of Water Transport Sub-Sector in Zambia.

This August House is well aware that water transport remains one of the critical transportation modes, particularly for places that depend wholly on water for transportation. It is for this reason that Government attaches importance to the development of this critical sector.

Mr. Speaker,

Government is well aware that in the recent past the utilisation of the rivers and canals as a means of transportation has not been optimal due to various reasons which included, among others, limited dredging equipment; poor infrastructure; shallow canals; and low financing of projects in the sector.

Sir,

I wish to state that this situation has changed in the last four years as the current leadership of the Patriotic Front Government, has consistently continued to invest in the development of infrastructure and procurement of equipment to ensure that water transport becomes the preferred means of transport for those people living around the water bodies. This investment is aimed at improving the quality and life of the people in wetlands and lake areas.

Government's commitment to improve the water transport sector is evidenced by the pre-prioritisation of the Water Transport Sector in the Revised Sixth National Development Plan. With this policy change the resource allocation to the sector increased and in 2014, Government allocated K150 Million which was utilised to dredge canals across the country and procure some critical equipment. Further, Government allocated an additional financing of US\$50 million from the Treasury to continue on its resuscitation and enhancement path to provide critical services to wetlands and lake areas.

Sir,

The allocation of the \$150 Million has had significant impact on the development of the water transport sector as outlined below.

- i)** The procurement of twenty-eight (27) dredging machines to be distributed across the country. These include ten (10) multi-purpose dredgers, five (05) weed harvester dredgers, five (05) cutter suction dredgers and five (05) amphibious excavator dredgers. I propose to distribute these dredgers as follows: Luapula Valley, **Nchelenge (01), Mwansabombwe (01), Mwense (02), Kawambwa (01)**; Bangweulu Wetlands (**Chilubi (02); Samfya (02); Lunga (02)**); Northern Province, (**Kaputa 01**), Muchinga Province, **Mpika (01)**; Lusaka Province, (**Kafue (01)**); North Western Province, **Zambezi (01)**; Western Province, **Kalabo-Sikongo (02); Sesheke-Mwandi-Mulobezi (01); Mitete-Lukulu (01); Nalolo-Senanga-Sioma (02); Shangombo (01), Kaoma-Mwandi-Nkeyema (01)**; Eastern Province, **Lundazi (01)**; Copperbelt Province, **Ndola (02)**; and Central Province (**Chibombo (01)**).

- ii) The procurement of six (06) passenger vessels to operate on Lakes Bangweulu, Mweru and Tanganyika and the Zambezi River;
- iii) The procurement of two cargo vessels (02) to operate on Lakes Mweru and Bangweulu; and
- iv) The procurement of sixteen (16) Marine Patrol Boats – this will improve water patrols and promote safety of navigation thus reducing casualties and fatalities on our water bodies.

Mr. Speaker,

Part of this equipment has already started arriving in the country and is being distributed to various parts of the country in accordance with the assessment findings. For example, the three (03) dredging machines that have since been distributed to Nalolo, Ndola and Kafue Districts.

In order to safe guard and prolong the life of the water vessels that are currently operating on our water bodies, Government has started the construction of harbour

facilities, landing jetties and harbour administration blocks in various locations in the country.

Sir,

In order to ensure that the development of the water transport sector is done in an efficient manner and feeds into road and rail transport system, Government is undertaking a study to develop the Water Transport Sub-Sector Infrastructure Master Plan which will guide the nation on the requirement and utilisation of the water transport system.

In addition, another study that is focusing on commercialising the water transport services on Lakes Bangweulu, Mweru and Tanganyika was commissioned and the report is expected by end of December, 2015. These studies are being undertaken with a view of implementing the development of this sector in collaboration with the Private Sector.

Mr. Speaker,

Mpulungu Harbour in Northern Province is an important international port for Zambia that facilitates trade between Zambia and the countries in the Great Lakes Region. Mpulungu District and the surrounding areas are partly dependent on the Port of Mpulungu for their economic and social sustenance as it provides employment opportunities.

In order to facilitate the development of this Port, Government has procured cargo handling equipment to ensure that it operates efficiently. The equipment procured includes:

- i) One (01) 300 ton Crawler Crane,
- ii) Four (04) 50 ton Fork Lifts,
- iii) One (01) Reach Stacker, and
- iv) Computers and Accessories.

Sir, Government is also collaborating with the African Development Bank to comprehensively modernise the Port of Mpulungu. In this regard, a Feasibility Study to modernise the Port Infrastructure was commissioned in June 2015. The study includes Detailed Engineering Designs of the port and is expected to be concluded in December, 2016.

Mr. Speaker,

Shang'ombo district in Western Province is yet another important gateway for trade between Zambia and Angola. To this end, a 10 kilometre canal between Shangombo District in Zambia and Rivungu District in Angola has been completed.

The Contractor has now commenced the construction of terminal port facilities in both Shangombo and Rivungu Districts.

The construction of both the canal and terminal port facilities is financed by the Angolan Government based on the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the two countries on 12th March, 2014 in Luanda, Angola.

Further, the government has awarded a contract to Mongu Trades Training Institute to construct 10 medium cost houses to support the operations of the port at Shangombo. The award of the contract to Mongu Trades Training Institute is in line with the Government's pronouncement of creating job opportunities for the youths.

Mr. Speaker,

In terms of policy reforms, the Government is in the process of revising the Inland Waterways Act Cap 466 and the Merchant Shipping Act Cap 468 so that it meets regional and international standards and best practices in maritime.

In order to improve performance in the water transport sub-sector, Government has commenced a study which aims at investigating the possibility of transforming the Department of Maritime and Inland Waterways into an Inland Waterways Authority.

Mr. Speaker,

In order to improve and invest in human resource capacities, my Ministry has planned to establish a Maritime Training School within the country. In order to ensure that this project becomes a reality, Government is actively engaging various stakeholders who include the International Maritime Organisation and the Private sector. This will help develop a critical mass of maritime technocrats who will improve the operations of the sub-sector as well as attracting regional trainees.

Sir,

I wish to conclude my statement by reiterating that the water transport sub-sector has the potential to contribute to the national economy and it should therefore be supported by all public and private sector institutions. With improved and increased investment and commitment, the water transport sub-sector will contribute to the development of this country.

Mr. Speaker, I Thank You.