



MINISTERIAL STATEMENT
ON THE WASHAWAY ON D775 BATOKA TO MAAMBA ROAD IN
SOUTHERN PROVINCE AND ON A DAMAGED SECTION ON D145
LUANGWA BRIDGE TO FEIRA ROAD IN LUSAKA PROVINCE

Mr. Speaker Sir,

I wish to thank you most sincerely for granting me this opportunity to make a Ministerial Statement on the Washaway experienced on the road D775 Batoka to Maamba in Southern Province and on a damaged section on the road D145 Luangwa Bridge to Feira in Lusaka Province.

Mr. Speaker,

The Government through my ministry has prioritized infrastructure such as roads, as key to national development. Accordingly, the Government is heavily investing in the construction, upgrading, rehabilitation and maintenance of the road infrastructure across the country.

This commitment is demonstrated through the implementation of various road infrastructure projects being undertaken in the country under the charge of the Road Development Agency (RDA). The RDA was established by the Public Roads Act No. 12 of 2002 for the purpose of providing care, maintenance and construction of all public roads in Zambia and to also regulate maximum weights permissible for transmission on roads.

Mr. Speaker,

The Government through the Ministry of Transport and Communications in September last year indicated through a press release that the country was likely to receive normal to above normal rainfall in this rainy season 2016/2017, with a possibility of flash floods. Institutions responsible for disaster management were requested to prepare for any eventuality that may arise during this period.

Indeed in the months of January and February 2017, the country has received normal to above normal rains that has exerted pressure on the road drainage systems across the country. On February 7, 2017 a report was received from Sinazongwe District Administration that the road D775 Batoka-Maamba has been washed away at Sikanungu Village, approximately 43 km from Batoka. The RDA immediately dispatched engineers to go and assess the damage and at the same time Bailey Bridge components were mobilised from Central and Western Provinces. In the interim a temporal solution to facilitate the movement of traffic was arrived at with the help of Maamba Collieries Ltd who provided the waste rock to fill up the washed away section.

Mr. Speaker,

The mobilization of these components to site has been completed and Zambia Army are currently mobilizing to site today 3rd March, 2017 to start the installation of the Bailey Bridges. This activity is expected to take 25 working days. Sir, it should be noted that this installation of Bailey Bridges is also at another point approximately 38 km from Batoka which was equally assessed by the RDA to be a weak point (a near washaway). Therefore, instead of one, there are now two points on the road that need to be worked on. The funds required for this exercise

amounting to **K1,084,000.00** have since been released to the RDA Regional Office in Choma, Southern Province.

Mr. Speaker,

In the case of the road D145 Luangwa Bridge to Feira, the Luangwa District Administration reported that a suspected mountain movement had occurred at approximately four (4) Km from the junction of D145 with Great East Road (T4) on Monday afternoon February 13, 2017. My Ministry with the help of Zambia Police closed the road to the public and dispatched engineers to go and assess the damage.

On February 14, 2017, the Permanent Secretary in the company of the Road Development Agency (RDA) Chief Executive Officer visited the site to appreciate the extent and possible causes of the damage in order to find a solution to the problem. After establishing that indeed the road was severely damaged by what appeared to be the movement in the mountain which caused the road pavement to buckle up or heave under stress, the road was declared not safe for the passage of traffic and was immediately closed to the public.

During this closure of the road, DMMU was requested to facilitate the movement of goods and people across the Luangwa River using boats. DMMU responded positively and on time.

Mr. Speaker,

After it was confirmed by my Ministry that what triggered the failure of the road was a movement in the mountain, the Geological Survey Department under the Ministry of Mines and Mineral Development was engaged to investigate the matter further. The Preliminary Report by the Geological Survey Department indeed confirmed that the Road D145 from Luangwa Bridge to Feira at approximately four (4) kilometers from the Luangwa Bridge failed due to differential stress of the earth materials that lost cohesion and moved downwards on hill slope. The cause is a natural geohazard as the rocks weathered and pushed through by water saturation due to the rains. This mass movement according to the geologists is a form of landslide called a Sluff.

Mr. Speaker,

As I speak today, my Ministry through the Road Development Agency has engaged a Contractor, China Geo Corporation (CGC), who has managed to treat the landslide by cutting to spoil all unstable material, creating platforms and benching of the slope. This intervention including the full reinstatement of the road pavement is estimated to cost approximately K9.6 million when it is completed.

Following the creation of a safe passage on the damaged section, the road has partially been opened to traffic through time intervals during the day between 06:00 hrs to 07:00 hrs in the morning and 12:00 hrs to 13:30 hrs in the afternoon. This partial opening of the road is to allow movement of goods and people across the damaged section and at the same time providing the contractor with adequate time to work.

Mr. Speaker,

Allow me to conclude by reaffirming that the Ministry of Housing and Infrastructure Development through the Road Development Agency will continue to work tirelessly to ensure that roads of good quality are constructed in our quest to transform Zambia from being landlocked to being land linked. I wish to also take this opportunity to thank the DMMU under the Office of Her Honor the Vice President, the Men and Women in Uniforms under the Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Home Affairs for coming to our aid in this time of emergency.

Mr. Speaker, I Thank You.

HON RONALD CHITOTELA, MP

MINISTER

MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT