

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

ON

### LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER IN ZAMBIA

Madam Speaker, I thank you for affording me this opportunity to issue a ministerial statement on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) in Zambia. First and foremost, I want to categorically state that Zambia is a Christian nation and its governance is anchored on Christian values and the rule of law.

Madam Speaker, the law in this country is very clear, that any sexual practice different from what our society has considered over a period of time as normal or the correct practice, and particularly that which is against our laws, is illegal and criminal. Our laws, in particular, state the following:

- (a) Section 155 of the Penal Code, states *inter alia* that, any sexual intercourse between men constitutes a criminal offence;
- (b) Section 156 of the Penal Code also criminalises any attempt to commit unnatural offences prohibited under Section 155; and
- (c) Section 158 of the Penal Code criminalises acts of gross indecency both between men and between women.

Madam Speaker, my ministry, under the guidance of His Excellency the President of the Republic of Zambia and Commander-in-Chief, has taken measures, and the Zambia Police Service is very active on this matter and is doing everything possible to sensitise the citizenry on the criminal aspect of these vices and the implication on the individuals involved, and the moral and traditional erosion the vices may cause on our society.

Madam Speaker, in this vein, the Zambia Police Service has recorded a total of eighteen cases of sodomy countrywide from 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2022 to 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2022, which is today. The following are the statistics and the actions taken:

| <i>Province/Place</i>       | <i>No. of cases</i> | <i>Arrests made</i>  | <i>Under investigations</i> |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| Lusaka                      | 7                   | 5  | 2                           |
| Copperbelt                  | 7                   | 6  | 1                           |
| Muchinga                    | 1                   | 1  |                             |
| TAZARA Division<br>in Mpika | 1                   | 1<br>(and convicted for seven<br>years imprisonment<br>with hard labour) |                             |
| Eastern                     | 1                   | 1  |                             |
| Western                     | 1                   | 1  |                             |

Madam Speaker, the police service is following these matters with keen interest, as it pursues the four suspects who are still under investigations; two in Lusaka, one on the Copperbelt and one from the Western Province, respectively.

Madam Speaker, the Government has noted, with concern, the rise in the statistics of cases of sodomy and any other form of sexual intercourse against the order of nature. However, we wish to note that these statistics are as a result of the sensitisations that have been made pertaining to the criminality of these activities and members of the public are coming forth to report these matters.

Madam Speaker, further, you may recall that on Tuesday, 17<sup>th</sup> May, 2022, in Lusaka, some named embassies mounted the rainbow flag, which symbolises LGBT pride and social movements, at their respective embassies on the aforementioned date, in commemoration of values and principles of their respective countries on human rights. When contacted by the Government, the embassies assured the Government that there was no intent to disregard Zambia's cultural norms and Christian values, as enshrined in the Constitution, to which their countries have due respect. The embassies regretted the inconvenience that could have been caused by their flying of the rainbow flag *albeit* on their premises which, in accordance with the Vienna Convention, are inviolable properties.

Madam Speaker, in another incident, on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2022, there was an event in Lusaka that was dubbed 'Lusaka July', which was organised by PR Girl Media. The purpose of this event, which was launched in 2016, under the reign of the Patriotic Front (PF), was to bring together lifestyle enthusiasts and business leaders in an afternoon of networking at a fashion polo event. The organisers of the event approached the Ministry of Tourism and Arts to partner with it to market the event, as a fashion show, and promote fashion tourism. The Government, through the Ministry of Tourism and Arts, participated in this event by launching it.

Madam Speaker, the House may wish to note that the Government did not sponsor the 'Lusaka July' event, as has been purported in the media, but launched it on the premise of promoting fashion tourism. It had little or no control over the extent to which participants at this event would express themselves. Information was provided that the event would attract regional visitors, which was going to be an opportunity to market Zambia as a tourist destination of choice. The Government was not in any way responsible for who attended the event, what they wore and financial sponsorship was not provided.

Madam Speaker, the Government, therefore, warns that anyone found practising or promoting any of the said acts shall be liable to prosecution in the courts of law. Further, the Government shall ensure that such behaviour and conduct is prevented, and that national morals and values are adhered to in order to preserve our Christian values.

I thank you, Madam Speaker.