

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

ON THE

2020 MOBILE ISSUANCE OF THE NATIONAL REGISTRATION CARDS (NRCS)

BY THE

HON. MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (MR KAMPYONGO), MP

Mr Speaker, let me start by thanking you for giving me this opportunity to render a ministerial statement on the 2020 mobile issuance of National Registration Cards (NRCs). The exercise was intended to provide access to the acquisition of NRCs by citizens who have attained the age of sixteen years and above, especially those who cannot easily reach district national registration offices.

Sir, the Ministry of Home Affairs through the Department of National Registration Passport and Citizenship is charged with the responsibility of conducting national and civil registration as well as the issuance of travel documents. The department also facilitates the acquisition of citizenship. The mandate is derived from the National Registration act Cap. 126, the Passport Act No. 28 of 2016, the Citizenship Act No. 33 of 2016, the Birth and Death Registration Act Cap. 151, the Marriage Act Cap. 50 and the Adoptions Act Cap. 54 of the Laws of Zambia. In addition, the supreme document of the land, the Constitution.

Mr Speaker, national registration entails registration of all eligible persons and issuing them with appropriate registration cards as legal identity in accordance with the National Registration Act Cap. 126 of the Laws of Zambia. This undertaking is conducted on a continuous and outreach basis.

Sir, between 1st August and 4th November, 2020, outreach activities were conducted in form of a mobile national registration exercise. This undertaking was carried out countrywide in a two-phased approach each of which covered five provinces.

Mr Speaker, Phase I involved the North, Luapula, the Eastern, the North-Western and the Copperbelt provinces and was flagged off on 1st August, 2020 by me. Owing to logistical challenges experienced during the first two weeks, the exercise was extended by ten days and ended on 19th September, 2020. Phase II covered the Western, the Southern, the Central, Muchinga and Lusaka provinces. This and started on 20th September, 2020. Phase II was extended by five days and ended on 4th November 2020.

Sir, during my last ministerial statement on the Floor of this august House, I assured hon. Members that I would issue a comprehensive statement on the 2020 Mobile Issuance of National Registration Cards after completing Phase II of the exercise. In this regard, I wish to highlight the successes of this undertaking.

Mr Speaker, the Ministry of Home Affairs planned to issue 1.5 million NRCs to eligible Zambians. I am happy to inform this august House and the nation at large that 1,592,974 NRCs were issued between 1st August and 4th November, 2020 representing a 106 per cent overall success rate. For the sake of my colleagues, I will repeat the figures. Like I said, 1,592,974 NRCs were issued between 1st August and 4th November, 2020 representing a 106 per cent overall success rate.

Sir, I want my colleagues to pay attention to the figures I will be reading. The breakdown of these statistics is as follows:

<i>Province</i>	<i>Targeted</i>	<i>Actual</i>	<i>Performance</i>
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		<i>Issued</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Eastern	210,000	188,661	90%
Muchinga	90,000	106,128	118%
Northern	110,000	171,800	156%
Luapula	100,000	181,041	181%
Lusaka	240,000	189,900	79%
Copperbelt	270,000	250,072	93%
Central	140,000	202,758	145%
North-Western	80,000	107,813	135%
Western	100,000	51,557	52%
Southern	160,000	143,244	90%

TOTAL	1,500,000	1,592,974	106%
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Mr Speaker, the total number of NRCs issued both to replace lost and damaged cards, including the issuance of new NRCs stands at 1,592,974, representing 106 per cent.

Mr Speaker, the success of the exercise is attributed to collaborative efforts by all stakeholders under the leadership of His Excellency the President of the Republic of Zambia Dr Edgar Chagwa Lungu.

Si5r, also want to thank the hon. Minister of Finance for releasing the required resources to enable the ministry to successful undertakes this important exercise. I further, want to thank the Provincial Ministers and their respective administrations for the support rendered and leadership provided in all the provinces and districts during the exercise. I will be failing in my duties if I do not thank you, hon. Members of this august House, civic leaders in all wards and our traditional leaders except for a few for encouraging Zambians to obtain National Registration Cards (NRCs).

Mr Speaker, such a mammoth task could not have gone without challenges especially that the exercise was conducted under the new normal era. I want to take this opportunity to thank Her Honour the Vice-President of the Republic of Zambia for providing personal protective equipment to the officers who were on the ground through the Disaster Management and Mitigation Unite (DMMU).

I also want to thank all officers who want out in the field, sleeping in class room blocks and working awkward hours in order to serve their fellow citizens. As a result of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, delivery of materials and equipment by some supplies was delayed due to the reduction of the number of cargo flights. This led to a slow start of Phase I of the exercise and the consequent extension of Phase I by ten days. Other challenges included politicizing of the exercise by some stakeholders, especially politicians. Some people continued to attribute national registration exercise to political activities.

Sir, the Government of the Republic of Zambia through the Ministry of Home Affairs is mandated by law to provide legal identity to all citizens aged sixteen and above. It is therefore, not a political exercise. All Zambians have the right to obtain a NRC because it enables them to participate in various socio-economic activities and also allows them to exercise their civic rights. I therefore, want to encourage all illegible persons that may not have been capture during the mobile registration exercise to visit the nearest NRC offices to obtain the NRC because it is their entitlement.

Mr Speaker, allow me to make a clarification on the temporary closure of the NRC offices in Lusaka District.

Sir, on Friday, the 20th of November, 2020, some applicants who visited the Department of National Registration Passport and Citizenship Headquarters tested positive to COVID-19. Following the said findings, the Disaster Management Team and the DMMU together with the Ministry of Health responded immediately by disinfecting the premises and having all members of staff tested. As a result, the ministry suspended all operations at registration offices in Lusaka District. Further, on the 23rd November, 2020, the Ministry of Home Affairs closed all the offices in the Southern Province for a day to facilitate for audit and ensure that they equally put measures in place to observe the health measures that have been prescribed.

Mr Speaker, in order to ensure that both members of staff and applicants are protected from contracting from the COVID-19 Virus, the ministry will continue to monitor the situation under the guidance of the Ministry of Health. In this regard, sub-district offices in Lusaka will be opened to members of the public on Wednesday the 25th November, 2020, on condition that every one adheres strictly to COVID-19 health guidelines. The headquarters will remain closed until further notice. COVID-19 is real and we must ensure that citizens are protected as they access public services.

Mr Speaker, in conclusion, I want to inform this august House that district registration offices in all parties of the country will remain open and continue to issue NRC on a routine basis. In addition, I wish to urge the members of the public not to exert undue pressure on our officers as

they discharge their duties. I will repeat this. I therefore, do not expect people to transport citizens in large numbers at one given time to our registration offices.

Mr Speaker, further during the period of voter registration no police report will be required for those who want to replace the lost NRC more especially in rural areas in order to encourage citizens to register as citizens and voters.

I thank you, Mr Speaker

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