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REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON THE DISBURSEMENT
OF THE 2016 CONSTITUENCY DEVELOPMENT FUND
(CDF) BY HON. VINCENT MWALE MP MINISTER OF
LOCAL GOVERNMENT.**

2ND NOVEMBER 2016

MR. SPEAKER

I wish to update the House regarding the disbursement of the 2016 CDF allocation and the revision of the CDF guidelines which are near completion.

MR. SPEAKER

My predecessor had assured the last sitting of Parliament that the Ministry will endeavour to update the House on developments in respect of where we are concerning the disbursement of the 2016 CDF allocations.

In this regard, therefore, I wish to state that my Ministry will live by that commitment to ensure that there are no gaps on the flow of information in respect of the funding status for the 2016 CDF allocation to the Constituencies and the conclusion of the revision of the CDF Guidelines.

MR. SPEAKER

Let me start with the issue regarding the revision of the CDF Guidelines. The current status of the revision and updating of the CDF Guidelines is that the consultations with stakeholders such as technocrats, NGOs and Civil Society have been concluded. We have since written to the Clerk of the National Assembly to set a date within November, 2016, to meet Honourable Members of Parliament for their input in respect of the draft revised CDF Guidelines. You may wish to know that the draft revised Guidelines were brought before the last sitting of Parliament, which met in the Amphitheatre within Parliament grounds. However, my Ministry was advised to withdraw the document following concerns raised by Honourable Members of Parliament. The concerns which were raised e.g. the inclusion of MPs as members of the CDF committees, have since been addressed.

It is, therefore, my hope that once we meet, the Members of Parliament will make comments that will assist the Ministry to finalise the document so that its implementation is no longer delayed and meets the aspirations of all stakeholders. Meanwhile, my Ministry will circulate the draft document for the perusal of the MPs once the date for the meeting is set.

In view of the urgency regarding the revision of the CDF Guidelines allow me, **Mr Speaker**, to request your indulgency that you authorise all Members of Parliament to attend the meeting once the date and venue are set.

MR. SPEAKER

Allow me to refresh the minds of the House and re-emphasise that the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) is still a charge budgeted for by the Ministry of Local Government annually in the National Budget appropriated by this House.

To this end, I wish to echo the fact that the 2016 CDF allocation was, therefore, budgeted for in compliance with the ceiling which the Treasury provided in the core circular that was issued at the time of the preparation of the 2016 Annual National Budget.

MR. SPEAKER

At this juncture, I also wish to announce to the House that at the time of budgeting the allocation available in the National Budget was a commitment to disburse the 2016 CDF allocation to 150 Constituencies.

However, following the last elections the number of Constituencies has increased to 156 arising from the delimitation exercise in which additional constituencies were created. This, therefore, implies that there is need to create additional fiscal space for the six more constituencies. In this regard my Ministry is engaging with the Ministry of Finance to chat the way forward.

MR. SPEAKER

On the issue of disbursement of the 2016 CDF, I wish to announce that the disbursement will be done directly from the Treasury to the CDF Accounts, which are maintained by the 106 Councils across the nation. The 2016 CDF was not disbursed at the time Parliament adjourned sine die and through the election period. This was because Government's desire was to ensure that we agree on the new guidelines so that the Honourable Members of Parliament are not deprived of their right of involvement in the adoption and approval of projects intended for implementation.

However, following the successful conclusion of elections and subsequently the appointment of Cabinet Ministers by His Excellency the President, and once we conclude the process of revising the Guidelines; my Ministry will liaise and consult with the Treasury to consider commencement of disbursements of the 2016 CDF.

MR. SPEAKER

Finally, I wish to assure Members of Parliament that my Ministry is committed to ensuring that CDF is disbursed and that the Guidelines are ready as soon as possible.

I thank you Mr Speaker.