MINSTERIAL STATEMENT ON THE HEALTH STATUS OF THE SIXTH REPUBLICAN PRESIDENT, MR EDGAR CLUNGU AND THE FORUM FOR DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT PRESIDENT MSEDITH NAWAKWI

Mr Muchima: Thank you, Madam Speaker, you requested the Government to render a Ministerial Statement to this august house on the health status of the sixth Republican President of Zambia, Mr. Edgar Chagwa Lungu and Ms. Edith Zewelani Nawakwi, President of the Forum for Democracy and Development. The Government cannot divulge and discuss the health status of any citizen because every Zambian citizen is entitled to privacy. Further, such a discussion would be against the medical practitioners' ethics, as it borders on betraying the Doctor-Patient relationship which is sacrosanct.

Madam Speaker, allow me, however, to state that every Zambian is entitled to access to quality medical services as enshrined in the Zambian Constitution. I want to emphasize that matters to do with the health status of an individual are personal and confidential in nature within the laws governing Medical Practice. As such, this statement will not delve into personal information concerning the 6th President and the President of the Forum for Democracy and Development.

Madam Speaker, I wish to state that the Government of the Republic of Zambia has been looking after the former President, Mr. Edgar Chagwa Lungu whenever he has requested for medical intervention, both locally and abroad. The last appointment the Government made for the former President was for him to travel to Pretoria, South Africa on medical grounds in September 2023. He was, however, unable to travel due to personal commitments. As Government, we are committed to providing medical support to every Zambian, including all our former leaders regardless of their political affiliation.

Madam Speaker, the House may wish to note that on 10th January 2025, Cabinet Office was informed that the former President would be traveling to the Republic of South Africa for medical attention. Upon receipt of the notification, and as per established practice and procedure, the Government immediately initiated the process of having the sixth President evaluated at the Maina Soko Medical Centre for possible evacuation to the Republic of South Africa. However,

on 17th January 2025, another correspondence was received by Cabinet Office from the sixth Republican President, indicating that, the former President would meet all costs related to his travel and medical attention. The correspondence further emphasized that the earlier communication had been merely informational to the Government of the Republic of Zambia.

Madam Speaker, Government has also come to learn, that our mother, Ms. Edith Zewelani Nawakwi, President of the Forum for Democracy and Development Party, has not been well lately. In the same vein, Government is committed to doing everything possible to assisting the former Minister. The government is in constant contact with both the former Minister and her relatives to appreciate and understand what needs to be done in order to remediate the situation.We will keep the nation informed about any developments.

Madam Speaker, we ask that every Zambian wishes the sixth Republican President of Zambia and Madam Nawakwi, and all Zambians, good health.

Madam Speaker, I thank you.