



## GOVERNMENT DONATES 156 STAR-LINK KITS TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY



Minister of Finance and National Planning, Hon. Dr Situmbeko Musokotwane, MP, (centre) handing over the 156 Starlink kits to the First Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Zambia, Hon. Malungo Chisangano, MP, (right).

**By Namasiku Mubiana**

The National Assembly of Zambia has received a donation of 156 Starlink kits from the Ministry of Science and Technology in collaboration with Smart Zambia Institute. These kits are designated for distribution in all the parliamentary constituencies across the country.

Speaking during the handover ceremony held on Thursday, 29<sup>th</sup> February, 2024 at the Parliament Buildings, First Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, Honourable Malungo Chisangano expressed

gratitude to the Government and the management of Smart Zambia Institute for the timely donation.

She said the kind gesture could not have come at a better time than now when the National Assembly is eager to increase the use of information communication technology (ICT) in its work and operations, especially with the recent launch of the My e-Parliament application in November last year, a digital tool aimed to facilitate better interaction between Parliamentarians and the electorate.

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## Government Donates 156 Starlink Kits To National Assembly

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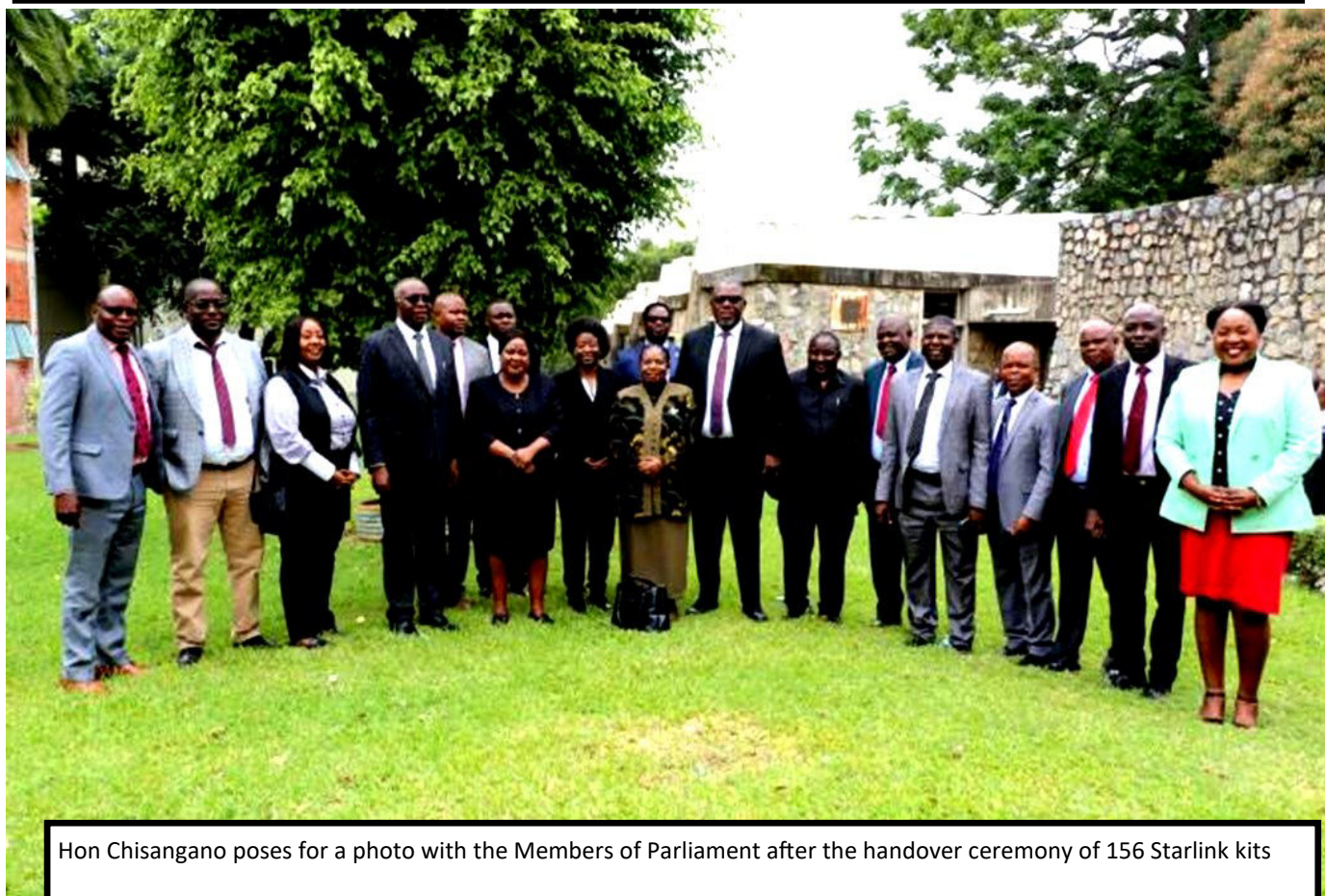
“However, for this application to work, it requires strong internet connectivity. Therefore, the Starlink kits being donated will facilitate the full implementation of the e-Parliament and will go a long way in bringing Parliament closer to the People,” she said.

Speaking at the same event, Minister of Finance and National Planning, Honourable Situmbeko Musokotwane said the kits would help improve digital communication

with the constituents and transform parliamentary operations.

Dr. Musokotwane said that Members of Parliament (MPs) will utilise the kits to communicate effectively with the electorates on important matters such as the Constituency Development Fund (CDF), eliminating the need for physical travel to address a matter that can be resolved in good time using the Starlink device.

Meanwhile, Smart Zambia Institute National Coordinator, Mr. Percy Chinyama said the kits have a significant coverage area which will ensure that constituency offices are accessible for constituents to utilise the devices for internet services.



Hon Chisangano poses for a photo with the Members of Parliament after the handover ceremony of 156 Starlink kits



## Hon SEFULO RE-ELECTED TO THE BUREAU OF THE OACPS-EU



First Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon Malungo Chisangano, MP (right) with Mrs. Sibeso Sefulo, MP, at the 64th Session of the OACPS-EU JPA in Luanda, Angola

**By Lombe Musonda**

**M**wandi Member of Parliament (MP) Ms Sibeso K Sefulo, has been re-elected to the Bureau of the Organisation of African, Caribbean States-European Union, marking a notable achievement in her diplomatic career. The re-election took place during the 64th Session of the Organisation of African, Caribbean, and Pacific States Joint Parliamentary Assembly (OACPS) and the 1st Session of the Organisation of African, Caribbean, and Pacific-European Union Joint Parliamentary Assembly (OACPS-EU JPA) in Luanda, Angola.

Ms Sefulo has been an integral member of the

bureau since October 2022, contributing significantly to shaping the organization's agenda. Her re-election underscores the recognition and appreciation of her dedication to advancing Africa's developmental agenda, particularly in collaboration with the European Union.

The meetings in Luanda mark the first gatherings under the new Samoa Agreement, signed in November 2023, following the conclusion of the previous Cotonou Agreement in December 2023. Ms Sefulo's continued presence in the decision-making body signals her crucial role in representing Southern Africa and

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Hon Chisangano with the Zambian delegation at the OACPS-EU JPA Meeting in Luanda, Angola.

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driving the region's priorities within the OACPS-EU framework.

In her new term, Ms Sefulo is expected to continue championing Southern Africa's interests and advancing collaborative efforts between the OACPS and the European Union. Her re-election is a testament to her leadership and commitment to fostering impactful partnerships for the benefit of the region and beyond.

The Organisation of African, Caribbean, and Pacific States Joint Parliamentary Assembly (OACPS) is a gathering that convenes parliamentarians from member countries of the OACPS to discuss various issues of common interest. The OACPS Joint Parliamentary Assembly plays a vital role in promoting parliamentary diplomacy, fostering collaboration among member countries, and advancing the collective interests of African, Caribbean, and Pacific states on the global stage in which the

Zambian Delegation is led by First Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Zambia, Honourable Malungo A Chisangano, MP. Other Members of the delegation include Ms Sibeso K Sefulo, MP, Mr Anthony Mumba, MP, Mr Sunday Chanda, MP, Mr Clement Andeleki, MP and Mr Jeffrey Mulebwa, MP.

The Organisation of the African, Caribbean and Pacific-European Union Joint Parliamentary Assembly (OACPS-EU JPA) meeting in Luanda, Angola is scheduled to end on 21st February, 2024.



## RUSSIA, ZAMBIA TO ENHANCE BI-LATERAL TIES



Speaker of the National Assembly Hon. Nelly Mutti pose for a photograph with the Russian Ambassador to Zambia, His Excellency, Mr Azim Yarakhmedo at Parliament Buildings.

**By Namasiku Mubiana**

The Russian Ambassador to Zambia, His Excellency, Mr Azim Yarakhmedo has reaffirmed Russia's dedication to enhancing diplomatic collaboration with Zambia, highlighting the ongoing initiatives aimed at fortifying the relations between the two nations. He said this during a courtesy visit on the Speaker of the National Assembly of Zambia the Rt Hon Ms Nelly B.K Mutti, MP, FAPRA, on Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> February, 2024, at Parliament Buildings, where he led a delegation from the Russian Federation.

His Excellency said that fostering closer diplomatic ties between Russia and Zambia is key for advancing the longstanding friendship between the two countries and addressing shared challenges effectively.

Ambassador Yarakhmedo also took the opportunity to extend an invitation of diplomatic good will to the Speaker of the National Assembly of Zambia and Members of Parliament to attend and monitor the upcoming presidential elections in March 2024.

His Excellency stated that the invitation reflects Russia's commitment to fostering international cooperation and seeking diverse perspectives on its electoral process. He noted that Zambia, as a valued partner, is among the countries invited to provide assessments and recommendations regarding the presidential election.

The ambassador was however quick to mention that the Speaker of the Council of Federation Mrs Valentina Matvienko, has ex-



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Speaker Mutti receiving a gift from His Excellency, Mr Azim Yarakhmedo

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tended a separate invitation to Speaker Mutti to exchange insights and best practices between the two legislative bodies.

And the Right Honourable Nelly B. K Mutti, MP, FAPRA expressed gratitude for the invitation extended by Mrs. Valentina Matvienko and assured that it will be honored after ensuring all necessary arrangements are made. Speaker Mutti further commended His Excellency, Mr Yarakhmedo for his efforts in bolstering bilateral relations between the two nations, citing past engagements aimed at parliamentary diplomacy and cooperation.

She stated that this has been witnessed through Russia's support to Zambia during the country's own presidential elections and collaborative efforts between electoral commissions. Speaker Mutti emphasized the importance of free and fair elections in upholding the will of the people. She expressed hope that the forthcoming Russian elections would

be conducted transparently and impartially for the benefit of the Russian populace.

The Right Honourable Speaker further seized the opportunity to address pending matters, including the National Assembly's request for support from the Russian Government in constructing a new Chamber. She also discussed avenues for deepening friendship and cooperation, such as Russia's celebration of 60 years of diplomatic relations with Zambia, the abolition of Russian visas for Zambian nationals, and the forthcoming centenary celebrations of the National Assembly in June.

The dialogue between the Zambian delegation and the Russian Ambassador's team signifies the ongoing commitment to mutual understanding and collaboration between the two nations, both politically and culturally.



## 9 FINNISH MPs TO DATE THE ZAMBIAN PARLIAMENT FOR DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGE



Speaker Mutti sharing a light moment with Her Excellency, Ms Saana Halinen during a gift exchange

### Namasiku Mubiana

Ambassador of Finland to Zambia, Ms Saana Halinen has said that a delegation of nine Finnish Members of Parliament (MPs) from the Committee on Finance is scheduled to visit Zambia, with the aim of exchanging best practices with their Zambian counterparts from the Planning and Budgeting Committee, focusing on enhancing partnership and improving oversight of government spending.

Speaking during a courtesy call on the Speaker of the National Assembly of Zambia, the Right Honourable Ms Nelly B.K Mutti, MP, FAPRA, on Monday, 26th February, 2024, at Parliament Buildings, Ms

Halinen stated that the initiative is designed to ensure fiscal responsibility aligned with national development priorities.

Her Excellency stressed that the official visit is of great importance for both Members, owed to the mutual benefits that will arise, as they will engage in fruitful discussions and knowledge-sharing to strengthen their oversight mechanisms and promote transparency in financial governance, which will ultimately lead to more effective utilization of public resources for the benefit of citizens.



## 9 Finnish MPs to Date the Zambian Parliament for Diplomatic Exchange



Speaker Mutti (2nd from left), Deputy Clerk Corporate Affairs, Mr Stephen Kawimbe (right) with Ambassador of Finland to Zambia, Ms Saana Halinen.

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Ms Halinen further stated that the visit will signify a milestone in bilateral relations between Finland and Zambia, demonstrating the shared commitment to promoting good governance and economic development. She informed that the delegation will further engage with various stakeholders, including the Parliamentary Budget Office, to exchange insights and explore opportunities for collaboration.

The Right Honourable Nelly B. K Mutti, MP, FAPRA, extended her gratitude to Ms. Halinen for her role in facilitating this collaboration, stressing its importance in strengthening international partnerships in parliamentary oversight and governance.

She stated that the exchange of best practices between the respective committees on finance will undoubtedly contribute to enhancing transparency, accountability, and efficiency in managing public resources.

The Honourable Speaker expressed optimistic that the visit will not only deepen the bonds of friendship between the two nations but also yield tangible benefits in advancing shared objectives of good governance and inclusive development for all citizens.