

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT
ON THE
WATER SHORTAGE IN NDOLA AS A RESULT OF A MALFUNCTIONING VALVE
AT KAFUBU DAM; AND THE CURRENT STATE OF WATER SHORTAGES IN
SOME PARTS OF THE COUNTRY AND MITIGATION MEASURES THE
GOVERNMENT WILL PUT IN PLACE TO MITIGATE THE SHORTAGE
BY

THE MINISTER OF WATER DEVELOPMENT AND SANITATION (ENG. NZOVU):
MP

Madam Speaker, I thank you most sincerely for giving me this opportunity to render a ministerial statement on two Urgent matters Without Notice raised as follows;

- (a) the critical water shortage in Ndola as a result of a malfunctioning valve at Kafubu Dam; and
- (b) the current state of water shortages in some parts of the country and mitigation measures the Government will put in place to mitigate the shortage.

Madam Speaker, before I continue, I urge all hon. Members of Parliament to listen to me carefully as some of the pronouncements I will be making will need their support.

Critical Water Shortages in Ndola

Madam Speaker, Hon. Mpundu raised concerns on the Floor of the House about serious water shortages in Ndola citing leakages from a malfunctioning valve at Kafubu Dam.

Madam Speaker, let me quickly clarify that the valve in question is functioning as per design as it is a designed outlet which ensures environmental flows and water availability in Luanshya District and other downstream users. Currently, the valve is operating at 20 per cent open

capacity allowing both Ndola and Luanshya Plants to abstract raw water for treatment and distribution. It is crucial to note that the valve cannot be fully closed for the reasons stated about.

Further, Madam Speaker, I am aware of the absence of water supply in Ndola District. Indeed, this has been a result of load management by Zesco Limited to the water treatment and water supply plants. Zesco Limited has since resolved not to load shed the dedicated supply lines. We, therefore, do not anticipate any more shortages. Ndola residents are also expected to benefit greatly after the completion of the Kafulafuta Project.

Water Shortages in Most Parts of the Country, Measures Being Undertaken, and the Response to the Drought Situation in the Country as A Result of the President's Declaration of the Drought as A National Disaster and Emergency

Madam Speaker, I wish to inform this House that the Government under the leadership of His Excellency Mr Hakainde Hichilema, President of the Republic of Zambia places a high premium on universal access to clean and safe water as water plays a critical role in sustaining human life as well as enhancing human and social development particularly this year when the country has experienced a severe drought which has therefore, been declared a national disaster and emergency.

Madam Speaker, on the current status on water shortages, let me start by informing the House that according to Water Resources Master Plan for Zambia 1995, the country has an average renewable surface water and groundwater potential over 150 cu km per year. In normal years, surface water potential is about 90 cu m annually while typical drought years, it drops to about 50 cubic km. The Zambia Meteorological Department estimates as Zambia's average annual precipitation is about 1,020 mm. However, the average annual precipitation during the 2023/2024 Drought Season, is only about 490 mm, the lowest received in the last 100 years. Indeed, this clearly demonstrates a critically low water resource the country has received in this season. Hon. Members of this august House may wish to note that our water resources are extreme stress due to severe drought, reduced rainfall and increasing demand from a growing

population. Further undesirable human related activities such as deforestation, unsustainable farming practices and encroachment of critical resource areas have worsened the situation.

Madam Speaker, as earlier alluded to, the low flows from the rivers, streams, dams, and drying boreholes which had a major source of water supply to our homes and businesses is a source of concern. Water utilities have really started experiencing early drying of their water sources due to the drought experience in the country and this has resulted in low abstraction of water hence, reduced water production leading to reduced hours of supply. The challenge of load management commonly referred to as loadshedding by ZESCO Limited has not spared the water utilities as without a reliable power supply, it becomes nearly impossible to maintain a consistent flow of water to homes and businesses.

Madam Speaker, the House may wish to note that the reduced water supply has led to a decrease in revenue for water utilities worsening their ability to cover their operation and maintenance costs making it a challenge to sustain service delivery. As the House is aware, the country has been grappling with cholera outbreaks primarily due to poor sanitation facilities like pit latrines, unsafe water sources such as shallow wells and poor hygiene practices all of which have the potential to contaminate water sources and increase the risk of outbreaks of diseases such as cholera, dysentery and typhoid.

Madam Speaker, in order to mitigate the effects of the drought, my ministry has put in place several measures. In terms of water source management interventions, the ministry through will intensify regulation, compliance and enforcement of the relevant laws to curb illegal activities such as encroachment of water sources, illegal water use, pollution of water sources and other vices that are negatively affecting our resources.

Madam Speaker, it is important to note that the protection of public streams and sources of water supply Statutory Instrument (SI) No.1 of 2000, prohibits activities likely to diminish the quantity of water such as cultivation, cutting of trees and excavation of sand within **50 m** of any water source. It must be noted that my ministry through WARMA has the power under SI No.1 of

2000 to destroy any unlawful works, crops or structures which have encroached on water sources without any compensation.

In addition, under Section 172 of the Water Resources Management Act No. 21 of 2011, offenders can be fined up to a maximum of K200,000 or imprisoned up to a maximum of a maximum of five years. This therefore, Madam Speaker, gives me an opportunity to educate and thereafter warn members of the public offending these pieces of legislation that time has come to enforce these pieces of legislation without fear or favour given the climate crisis we are currently facing. Further, my ministry will intensify public awareness on sustainable water utilization and catchment protection measures.

On water resources developing interventions, Madam Speaker, regarding the drying of the Kafue River, my ministry is exploring the watering of Ndola limestone pitch to fit into the river. Further, my ministry will drill commercial boreholes in the area to supplement water production. My ministry will also construct 2000 water supply schemes. The scope of which includes drilling of a 6 inch borehole, 80 m deep, fully cased, equipped with the horsepower solar pump and the storage of 10,000 litre meter as well as 1km of water reticulation. Further, 500 existing boreholes will be rehabilitated and equipped with storage solar pumps and water reticulation system.

My ministry will also construct twenty-eight dams in 2024 and early 2025, we will construct about sixteen dams two of which are already under construction and scheduled for completion in December, 2024 whilst the construction of 12 dams are expected to start in November, 2024 and end by June, 2025. The ministry will in 2024 carry out routine maintenance of 770 dams in the five provinces most affected by this drought. This would be done under public works using local communities and this will create employment for about 8000 of people. Further, my ministry will carry out majorly rehabilitation of twenty dams in some of the drought affected districts to support productive use.

Regarding the rehabilitation of the twenty dams, works for six dams are ongoing through the Zambia National service (ZNS) and are scheduled for completion by December, 2024 while the ministry has commenced the process of contracting consultants to undertake the feasibility

studies for the remaining fourteen dams earmarked for construction in 2025. In addition, the ministry will construct 225 watering points, 150 for livestock and seventy-five for wildlife for both livestock fisheries. These measures will support agriculture as well as domestic and industrial water use.

Madam Speaker, several projects should have been benefited our people have stalled over the years due to lack of funding because of the crippling debt which led to non-payment of contractual obligations. The ministry is looking at revising all these projects with the view to completing them urgently to which mitigate water shortages for the following projects; Kafulafuta Water Supply System at US\$449 million under the Kafubu Water and Sanitation Projects which is expected to be completed and commissioned by end of August, 2024.

The House may wish to know that the project will improve water supplied areas in Ndola, Luanshya, Masaiti and Mpongwe districts benefiting over a million people. Some of the component of the Nkana Project USD K200 million water supply and sanitation project phase II have been expedited and will now be completed by December, 2024 and will benefit over 270,000 people. Beneficiaries will mainly be from Kalulushi, Ganerton, Chambishi, Wusakile and Mindolo areas. The remaining components of the project re scheduled for completion in June next year.

Madam Speaker the constructor under the integrated small water town supply and sanitation scented projects in Mongu District which have stalled due to contractual issues have since been resolved following my intervention. The contractor is now back on site has committed to completing the project within a period of three months. I, will therefore, Commissioned this project in August, 2024, which will bring about 5,000 household connections benefiting about 50,000 of our people with twenty-hours of water supply.

To respond to the current emergency, Madam Speaker, 150 Euros Zambia Water Supply and Sanitation Project currently being implemented under Mulonga Water Supplying Sanitation Company has been fast-tracked and the project benefits in excess of 7000 people. The 16 million

Sinda Water Supply and Sanitation Project under Eastern Water and Sanitation Company is also being expedited.

Madam Speaker, all these projects will be fast-tracked to ensure that they are completed within schedule as an immediate response to the drought.

Madam Speaker, the Government is currently drilling about twenty boreholes to improve water supply in selected parts of Kanyama and George townships under the Kanyama water improvement project as part of the intervention following the recent outbreak of cholera in Lusaka. This water will feed into the 10,000 litre tanks that were installed as part of the cholera response in the said areas where water is currently delivered by water browsers. This will make available clean and safe water supply to the residents of Kanyama and George townships, benefiting 30,000 people. This project will be completed by September 2024.

Madam Speaker, further, the Government installing 1,000 household connections in Garden Park, benefiting over 30,000 people. This project is expected to be completed by December 2024.

Madam Speaker, the rural people, the rural countrymen have not been left behind, in the rural areas across the country, 203 solar powered schemes, fully equipped boreholes will be drilled and 428 boreholes with hand pumps will be upgraded to solar powered pipe water schemes. 500 non-functional boreholes will also be rehabilitated.

Madam Speaker, on the drilling of commercial boreholes to mitigate against the reduced water production my ministry plans to drill 222 commercial boreholes complete with all civil works and equipped with solar dotted around the country. Of the 222 commercial boreholes, funding for 110 has already been secured and weeks are underway.

Madam Speaker, one of the other problems the ministry is grappling with its power, as alluded to earlier. We are looking at alternative power to ensure that sensitive water installations continue running, the ministry will use alternative sources of energy in all water utility companies. This is

in consultation and with the support of the Ministry of Energy. In the immediate term, my ministry will continue with engaging ZESCO Limited through the Ministry of Energy to provide dedicated power lines to enable utilities to supply at least a minimum quantity of water. In the medium to long term, my ministry will embark on the installation of solar power systems on water and sanitation facilities in all water utilities. In this regard, the ministry is implementing the Euros 118 million Nexus Energy and Water Program for Zambia (NEWPZ) from April 2024 to 2024 to April of 2028. This initiative is supported by the European Union (EU), German and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). This will benefit five water utility companies, including Lukanga, Southern Nkana Eastern and Chambeshi by leveraging solar energy for their plants.

Reduction of Water Losses

Madam Speaker, my ministry intends to procure 300,000 domestic water meters to reduce non-revenue water which are detrimental to the financial viability of water utilities and, hence improve water supply to communities. Further, my ministry will ensure that rehabilitation of the water distribution systems and treatment plants throughout the country.

Sanitation Interventions

Madam Speaker, in order to mitigate against this huge public health risk posed by the poor sanitation facilities, my ministry will construct 250 waterborne sanitation facilities in public places, in five province mostly affected by the drought. Further, under the Nkana sanitation project, my ministry will rehabilitate sewer and water networks and construct 285 household waterborne toilets at a cost of K17 million.

Madam Speaker, the House is urged and now proposes that the water component of the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) be increase to a minimum of 10 per cent and that this component be co-managed by the Ministry of Water Development and Sanitation to ensure quality cost and timely delivery of water.

Madam Speaker, in order to effectively respond to the emergency, my ministry requires a collective effort from all sectors of society. I therefore, urge all citizens to cooperate with the measures being in place. I urge every citizen to practice water conservation and support initiatives aimed at ensuring a sustainable water supply. To this effect, a national wide campaign will be undertaken to sensitise the nation on saving water and safer water practices.

Madam Speaker, the ministry requires a total of K3 billion to carry out the measures outlined above and so I request this august House to allocate the necessary resources to carry out this plan. As His Excellency declared the drought national disaster and emergency, all procurement will be fast tracked. I have since constituted a multi disciplinary drought implementation management committee to ensure effective and efficient execution of all projects. I have outlined and urged them to ensure that all project conform to three principles of project execution of quality, cost and timeliness, as pronounced by His Excellency, Mr Hakainde Hichilema.

Madam Speaker, the Ministry of Water Development and Sanitation is committed to overcoming this challenge and ensuring that every citizen has access to clean, safe and reliable water by working tirelessly to address the immediate needs and to build a resilient water supply system for the future.

I thank you, Madam Speaker.
