



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

BY

**HONOURABLE REUBEN P. MTOLO, MP MINISTER OF
AGRICULTURE**

**ON PAYMENTS TO FARMERS THAT SUPPLIED MAIZE TO THE
FOOD RESERVE AGENCY (FRA) DURING THE 2025 CROP
MARKETING SEASON.**

4TH NOVEMBER 2025.

MADAM SPEAKER,

THANK YOU FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY TO PROVIDE AN UPDATE TO THIS AUGUST HOUSE, AND INDEED TO THE NATION, ON THE STATUS OF PAYMENTS TO FARMERS WHO SUPPLIED MAIZE TO THE FOOD RESERVE AGENCY (FRA) DURING THE 2025 CROP MARKETING SEASON.

AS GUIDED BY YOU MADAM SPEAKER, I WANT TO INFORM THE HOUSE ABOUT THE UNDERLYING CAUSES OF PAYMENT DELAYS AND THE CONCRETE STEPS GOVERNMENT IS TAKING TO RESOLVE THE MATTER. FURTHER, I WILL INFORM THE HOUSE ON THE ISSUE OF STORAGE OF MAIZE GRAIN COLLECTED FROM FARMERS BY THE FRA.

MADAM SPEAKER,

THE FOOD RESERVE AGENCY COMMENCED THE 2025 CROP MARKETING SEASON ON **30TH JUNE, 2025**. THE PROGRAMME HAS RECORDED AN OVERWHELMING RESPONSE FROM SMALL-SCALE FARMERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

IN THE CURRENT MARKETING SEASON, THE FRA HAD PROJECTED TO PURCHASE **543,000 METRIC TONNES** OF MAIZE AT **K6,800 PER METRIC TONNES OR K340 PER 50KG BAG**. THE TOTAL COST FOR THE PURCHASE OF THE **543,000 MT** WAS ESTIMATED AT **K3,692,400,000**.

MADAM SPEAKER,

DUE TO THE BUMPER HARVEST EXPERIENCED IN THE 2024/2025 SEASON AND THE LIMITED PARTICIPATION OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN MAIZE MARKETING, GOVERNMENT DECIDED TO INCREASE ITS SHARE OF MAIZE PURCHASES.

AS OF 31ST OCTOBER, 2025, FRA HAD PURCHASED **1,663,934 MT** OF WHITE MAIZE VALUED AT **K11,314,750,520**. THIS MAIZE WAS SUPPLIED BY A TOTAL OF **846,655 FARMERS** FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

THIS IMPLIES A **306 PERCENT** INCREASE ABOVE THE INITIAL INTENDED TARGET. THE EXTRA COST, AND THEREFORE, THE ADDITIONAL CASH REQUIREMENT WAS **K7,622,350,520**.

MADAM SPEAKER,

GOVERNMENT ATTACHES GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THE TIMELY PAYMENT OF OUR HARDWORKING FARMERS AND IS DOING ITS LEVEL BEST TO ENSURE THAT THE DEBT OWED TO FARMERS IS PAID WITHIN REASONABLE TIME.

WE WILL NOT RELENT IN FINDING SOLUTIONS TO ENSURE THAT OUR FARMERS ARE PAID THEIR DUES IN GOOD TIME TO ALLOW THEM PREPARE FOR THE NEXT FARMING SEASON.

I WISH TO REPORT THAT GOVERNMENT HAS SO FAR DISBURSED **ZMW2,088,550,000.00** TOWARDS FARMER PAYMENTS. THE REMAINING BALANCE IS BEING ADDRESSED THROUGH STRUCTURED FINANCIAL INTERVENTIONS TO ENSURE THAT ALL FARMERS ARE PAID AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO ACCELERATE THE PAYMENTS, GOVERNMENT THROUGH THE FRA HAS SUCCESSFULLY CONCLUDED ENGAGEMENTS WITH COMMERCIAL BANKS FOR A STRUCTURED LOAN FACILITY AMOUNTING TO **ZMW5 BILLION**. THIS FACILITY WILL BRIDGE THE FINANCING GAP AND ENABLE THE FRA TO CLEAR MUCH OF THE REMAINING DUES TO FARMERS.

FURTHER, THE FRA HAS INITIATED MAIZE SALES TO ENHANCE ITS LIQUIDITY. THESE EFFORTS WILL ENABLE GOVERNMENT TO RESOLVE THE OUTSTANDING PAYMENTS TO FARMERS.

MADAM SPEAKER,

ALLOW ME TO ASSURE THE NATION THAT THERE IS SUFFICIENT STORAGE SPACE FOR ALL MAIZE COLLECTED BY THE FRA. THE FRA HAS A TOTAL OF **1,105,510 MT** OF OWN STORAGE SPACE. THE AGENCY HAS **1,663,934 MT** FROM THE 2025 MARKETING SEASON AND **167,356 MT** CARRYOVER STOCK. THIS BRINGS THE TOTAL MAIZE STOCK TO **1,831,290 MT**. THE **727,027 MT** OF STORAGE SPACE ABOVE THE FRA STORAGE SPACE HAS ALREADY BEEN ARRANGED THROUGH THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

MADAM SPEAKER,

GOVERNMENT REMAINS COMMITTED TO ENSURING THAT ALL THE MAIZE PURCHASED BY THE FOOD RESERVE AGENCY IS PROPERLY STORED PARTICULARLY THAT THE RAINS HAVE COMMENCED.

ALLOW ME TO ALSO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO THANK ALL OUR FARMERS FOR THEIR CONTINUED PATIENCE AND CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY.

GOVERNMENT REMAINS STEADFAST IN ENSURING THAT THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR CONTINUES TO THRIVE AS A PILLAR OF ZAMBIA'S ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT AGENDA.

MADAM SPEAKER, I THANK YOU.