

TUESDAY, 2 OCTOBER, 2018

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

ON THE

HUMAN WILDLIFE CONFLICTS

BY THE HON. MINISTER OF TOURISM AND ART, MR BANDA

Mr Speaker, thank you for giving me this opportunity to render a ministerial statement and inform the nation on the extent of the problem of human wildlife conflicts in the country and what is being done in addressing and providing mitigation measures.

Sir, the problem of human wildlife conflict in Zambia is huge. The Ministry of Tourism and Art in 2017, through the Department of National Parks and Wildlife received a total of 6,085 reports of human wildlife conflicts across the country. This resulted in sixty-three people being killed and twenty eight people injured with a total of 279 livestock killed by wildlife animals. Wildlife animals also destroyed several unquantified crop fields.

Mr Speaker, in response to this, the Department of National Parks and Wildlife killed a total of 125 problem animals to control the situation. These included twenty six elephants, thirty six hippopotamuses, sixteen crocodiles, twenty four baboons, sixteen buffaloes, three lions, three hyenas and one bush pig.

Sir, in the last six years, the Department of National Parks and Wildlife received an average of 4,490 reports of human animal conflicts with an average of forty four people killed and 140 problem wild animals being killed as a control measure. During the same period, incidences of human animal conflicts, numbers of people killed by wild animals and numbers of killed problem wild animals show increasing trends. These statistics indicate the human animal conflicts are, indeed, a huge problem of concern to the Ministry of Tourism and Art.

Mr Speaker, the human animal conflicts have apparently increased in the country primarily because humans are increasingly encroaching, settling and cultivating in wildlife habitats and corridors. Further, fishing in hippo and crocodile inhabited rivers is usually done with no concern of safety measures. For example, people will wade in rivers with dangerous animals while fishing. The animal behavioural activities have, to a large extent, increased chances of human/animal encounters. As a result, humans are being killed, injured and their properties damaged and wild animals are also being killed, disturbed or displaced from their habitats.