

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT
ON THE
STATUS OF THE DECLARATION OF A THREATENED STATE OF PUBLIC
EMERGENCY
BY THE HON. MINISTER OF JUSTICE, MR LUBINDA

Madam Speaker, thank you for allowing me to update the House on a matter of national importance. You will recall that on 5th July, 2017, His Excellency the President of the Republic of Zambia, Mr Edgar Chagwa Lungu, invoked the provisions of Article 31 of the Constitution of the Republic of Zambia, Chapter 1 of the Laws of Zambia, thereby declaring a threatened state of public emergency.

The events which led to the invocation of Article 31 of the Constitution were outlined by His Excellency the President when he stated that the country had experienced unexplained fire outbreaks and vandalism of strategic installations bordering on economic sabotage. These systematic events were as follows:

- (a) in August, 2016, Tambala Market in Bauleni in Lusaka was set ablaze;
- (b) in April, 2017, the Mongu Local Court was set ablaze;
- (c) in April, 2017, Luburma Market in Kamwala in Lusaka was set ablaze;
- (d) in the same month, a person was apprehended for attempting to set ablaze the Intercity Bus Terminus in Lusaka;
- (e) in a related event, four youths were arrested outside the Lusaka Central Correctional facility with substances capable of causing fire;

Madam Speaker, I want to repeat (e) because somebody questioned it. He might not have understood. In a related event, four youths were arrested outside the Lusaka Central Correctional facility with substances capable of causing fire.

- (f) on May 1, 2017, Kafue District Education Board offices were set ablaze and two containers of petrol were found on the scene;
- (g) on June 1, 2017, 10,000 households were affected in Ndola following the destruction of the Zambia Electricity Supply Corporation (ZESCO) pylons;
- (h) this was followed by a similar act where citizens and industries serviced by the Kafue West/Lusaka West line were affected by the destruction of yet another ZESCO pylon;
- (i) this event was followed by the setting ablaze of Lusaka City Market, the country's largest market and property worth millions of Kwacha was unfortunately destroyed; and
- (j) simultaneously, a fire, whose target seemed to be ZESCO pylons, erupted at Lusaka's Misisi Township Market.

Madam Speaker, Article 31 of the Constitution provides that:

- “31(1) The President may at any time by the proclamation published in *Gazette* declare that a situation exists which, if allowed to continue may lead to a state of public emergency.
- (2) A declaration made under clause (1) of this Article shall cease to have effect on the expiration of a period of seven days commencing with the day on which the declaration is made, unless before the expiration of such period, it has been approved by a resolution of the National Assembly supported by a majority of all the Members thereof not accounting the Speaker.