



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND ARTS

**STATEMENT BY HON. JEAN KAPATA, MP, MINISTER OF TOURISM AND
ARTS ON THE LIFTING OF THE BAN ON CAT HUNTING IN ZAMBIA**

JULY 2015

Mr. Speaker,

I thank you for according me this opportunity to issue a Ministerial Statement on the lifting of the ban on cat hunting. I am aware that the public has received this development with mixed reactions and I, therefore, wish to shed more light on this subject.

Mr. Speaker,

Allow me to state that the Patriotic Front (PF) Government, under the able leadership of His Excellency Mr. Edgar Chagwa Lungu, attaches great importance to the development of the tourism sector due to its potential to contribute to job creation, poverty reduction and economic well-being of the people at the grassroots. You may wish, to note that wildlife still remains the mainstay of leisure tourism in this country. Zambia subscribes to both consumptive and non-consumptive tourism.

Mr. Speaker,

This August House and the public at large may need to note that in Zambia, wildlife has been designated to 20 National Parks and 36 Game Management Areas (GMAs), totaling 236,376 square kilometers which is equivalent to 31.4 % or one-third of the national territory. Of the 20 national parks, only four: namely; Kafue, South Luangwa, Lower Zambezi and Mosi-oa-Tunya, are self-sustaining.

The wildlife estate is managed by Zambia Wildlife Authority, whose strength is currently only 1,250 Wildlife Police Officers. To effectively, manage the wildlife estate at optimal levels, ZAWA needs at least 3,500 Wildlife Police Officers.

Mr. Speaker,

The current capacity of ZAWA and even if it were at its full man power strength, it is not possible for Government to effectively manage and protect wildlife resources alone. To this effect, the Zambia Wildlife Act No. 12 of 1998 provides for co-management of wildlife estates with communities living around Game Management Areas (GMAs) and the private sector. This is an International best practice for wildlife conservation and management.

Mr. Speaker,

As this August House may recall, Government effected the ban on cat hunting and including the suspension of safari hunting in the nineteen (19) hunting blocks on 10th January 2013. Some of the reasons advanced included; weak regulatory mechanisms, declining lion populations in some areas due to indiscriminate and over harvesting, depletion of habitats for lions and unreliable statistics upon which to base quotas.

Mr. Speaker,

I am happy to report that most of the parameters that informed imposition of the ban on cat hunting and suspension of safari hunting in the nineteen hunting blocks no longer hold because Government implemented various measures to improve the situation.