

**WEDNESDAY, 28 MARCH, 2018**

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**ANNUAL RETURNS OF SOCIETIES**

**The Minister of Home Affairs (Mr Kampyongo)**

Madam Speaker, I want to sincerely thank you for according me this opportunity to issue a ministerial statement on the obligation by all registered societies to file annual returns in accordance with the law. The Societies Act, Chapter 119 of the Laws of Zambia provides for the registration and deregistration of societies.

Madam Speaker, currently, there are over 25,000 registered societies which are expected to file annual returns with the Registrar of Societies. These registered societies include women clubs, youth clubs, farmers' clubs, cultural groups, associations, community service societies, political parties and religious bodies, among others.

Madam Speaker, it is of great concern that the majority of these registered societies are not complying with the requirement of filling in returns. In this regard, my ministry issued a press statement in which amnesty was given to all defaulting societies to reactivate their registration by remitting the sum of K100 for each year defaulted without any penalties. This amnesty is aimed at ensuring that all registered societies are captured on the societies registration system for better management and coordination. Further, the amnesty will help clean the register by ensuring that non-complying societies are deregistered. The period of the amnesty is with effect from 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2018, to 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2018.

Madam Speaker, since the amnesty was issued, it is encouraging to note that some defaulting societies are coming forward to inquire the status of their registration. However, I am concerned that the number of defaulting societies that have so far normalised their registration status is less than 1 per cent. This is undesirable and considering that the amnesty period is now over a month since it took effect, we expect a little bit more.

Madam Speaker, I, therefore, wish to appeal through this august House, to the nation and indeed to my fellow parliamentarians, whom I believe are custodians of these societies in their various