



Republic of Zambia

Ministerial Statement by Honourable Dr. Michael L. Kaingu, MP., Minister of Higher Education, on the Closure of the Copperbelt University and the University of Zambia.

9th February 2016

Mr. Speaker,

I wish to thank you for giving me the opportunity to make a Ministerial Statement on the closure of our two major public Universities, namely the University of Zambia (UNZA) Great East Road Campus and the Copperbelt University (CBU).

Sir, on Wednesday, 3rd February 2016 I announced the closure of the two Universities following days of violent protests by students and damage to public property. The only students that were exempted from this closure were those from the school of medicine Ridgeway and Ndola campuses, graduate schools, evening, distance and parallel programmes.

Sir, I wish to state from the outset that the closure of the two universities was a very painful decision that we had to make but unfortunately, that was the only option that students left us with.

Mr. Speaker,

The Education Sector is Government's priority number one. Currently, almost 20% of the national budget goes towards this sector. In order to increase access to university education, Government supports **vulnerable** students that are accepted to pursue studies at UNZA and CBU. As we are still finalising the

establishment of the Loans Board, vulnerable students are supported through the payment of Tuition and accommodation fees, accommodation refunds for students not accommodated by the universities, meal allowances, book allowances, and project allowances.

Sir, Tuition and accommodation fees are paid to the universities at the beginning of every academic year while other allowances are paid directly to the students.

Meal allowances are paid to the students at the beginning of every term. Book allowances are paid to students at the beginning of every academic year. Project and accommodation refunds are paid to entitled students upon receipt of information from the universities.

Mr. Speaker,

The Copperbelt University students were paid book and term one meal allowances on 10th June 2015 (at the beginning of term one); term 2 allowances were paid on 9th November 2015 while project and accommodation refunds were paid on 18th January 2016. Part of the term 3 meal allowances were paid on 2nd