

John



Republic of Zambia

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

BY

THE MINISTER OF GENERAL EDUCATION

**HON. DR. JOHN J. N. PHIRI, MP, ON THE CONDUCT OF
THE 2015 GRADE NINE (9) COMPUTER STUDIES PAPER 2
(PRACTICAL) EXAMINATION ON 2ND NOVEMBER, 2015.**

NOVEMBER, 2014

Mr. Speaker,

On Tuesday the 3rd November, 2015 Hon. Mrs. Masebo the Member of Parliament for Chongwe constituency raised a point of order in the House on the conduct of the 2015 Grade 9 Computer Studies Paper 2 (Practical) examination.

Sir, in your ruling you stated that the Hon. Minister of General Education should issue an appropriate statement, at an appropriate time, bearing in mind that these examinations are on-going. Sir, allow me to thank you for giving me the latitude to present my Statement at an appropriate time. Just like in the legal fraternity where a case before the courts of law, cannot be commented upon, in educational assessment too, we guard ourselves from commenting on an on-going examination. A postmortem assessment of the whole examination is held at the end of the examinations. In this case it will be held after the last paper is written on 20th November, 2015. This statement should therefore be looked at in that context.

The Computer Studies subject was examined through two papers. Paper 2 was a practical and was administered on the 2nd November, 2015 and Paper 1 is a theory paper which was examined on the 10th November, 2015. I had to wait until the two papers were examined before issuing this statement on the examination of the Computer Studies papers. Having said this, let me inform the House that the Ministry went out of its way and broke its own guidelines to issue a Press Statement on 3rd November, 2015, a day after the practical Examination in Computer Studies was conducted. The Statement which no doubt escaped the attention of Hon. Masebo read and I quote:

The Ministry of General Education would like to apologise to the parents and learners for the inconvenience caused during the administration of Computer Studies Practical Examinations yesterday 2nd November, 2015.

It was not the Ministry's intention to have some learners write these examinations late in the night but due to circumstances and challenges beyond our control, such as inadequate computers in some schools while others experienced power cuts, whilst conducting the examination.

The Ministry would also like to take this opportunity to appeal for calm among parents and learners as the Computer Studies examinations will not be a compulsory subject to determine qualification to Grade 10.

We would also assure parents and learners that such an experience will not happen again in future examinations, end of quote.

Mr. Speaker,

Coming to the Point of Order proper, let me say this: Hon. Members of Parliament will recall that in January 2014, the Ministry announced the implementation of the revised Primary and Secondary School curricula to be done in a phased approach starting with Grade 1, 5, 8 and 10. These classes have since progressed to Grade 2, 6, 9 and 11 this year 2015.

Sir, as announced at the January 2014 Launch, the first examination of the revised curriculum is at Grade 9 this year 2015. One of the subjects, in the revised curriculum is Computer Studies.

As I mentioned earlier in this Statement the Computer Studies subject is examined using two Papers: Paper 1 which is Theory paper comprising three sections: A, B and C. Section A has 15 multiple choice questions, Section B has 15 short answer questions and Section C has 4 questions demanding long answers. The paper accounts for 60% of the examination.

Paper 2, which is Practical, comprises two compulsory questions drawn from Word Processing, Spreadsheets, Desktop Publishing, Presentation and Multimedia. Candidates are required to answer the 2 questions by using a computer. The paper accounts for 40% of the examination.

This year's Computer Studies Paper 2 (Practical) Examination required candidates to work on a simple spreadsheet and to type a letter, all with simple instructions. I lay on the table of the House the said Computer Studies Practical examination Paper 2 numbered 402/2.

Mr. Speaker

There are two institutions working together in the implementation of the new curriculum. The Examinations Council of Zambia which is