
PRESS STATEMENT ON THE SETTLEMENT OF ILLEGALLY EARNED EMOLUMENTS BY MINISTERS

LUSAKA, Monday 18 January 2021

The Alliance for Community Action is deeply concerned with the non-disclosure of the purported well-wishers who settled legal debts owed to the treasury by former ministers who illegally stayed in office after the dissolution of parliament in 2016 as ordered by the Constitutional Court.

According to media reports quoting the General Secretary of the Patriotic Front, all the money owed by active members of the party affected by the judgement had been settled through donations made by companies and individuals.

The partial settlement was later confirmed by the Accountant General Mr. Kennedy Musonda in a statement dated 15th January 2021. According to the statement, about 2.6 million Kwacha was paid through bulk deposits while the balance was paid by individuals, leaving a balance of just over 29 thousand Kwacha.

However, the statement did little to allay concerns that such donors could be individuals and corporate entities with beneficial relationships with state institutions. The Accountant and General and Secretary to the Treasury owe the Zambian people a duty to disclose the source of all such monies paid on behalf of the ministers.

Lack of disclosure on the part of the above-mentioned public officers will do little to allay concerns of money laundering and false declarations. At the very least, the full disclosure of the minister's benefactors must be made to the honourable court which made the ruling on behalf of the People.

Further, we note that banking practice requires depositors to declare their sources of income when making deposits with financial institutions. It is important for the citizens of Zambia to know the sources of the money paid to ensure that it can be traced, and the owners have prior or after making such deposits, paid taxes and other statutory obligations that may be chargeable on the amounts paid.

Considering that the PF is the party currently wielding political power in Zambia, they have a higher responsibility to conduct their affairs in a transparent manner especially those pertaining to financial donations. It is a notorious fact that political donations are more often than not made by individuals and entities who expect benefits in return.

We are also aware that at least three of those affected were previously or later said to have had their dues settled. We note that the Minister of Infrastructure Development Mr. Vincent Mwale publicly stated that he paid for himself. Earlier, Green Party President, Mr. Peter Sinkamba made

a public statement that he had settled the amount owed by the Minister of Home Affairs Mr. Stephen Kampyongo. This situation further deepens the lack of clarity of the circumstances and accuracy of the figures purported to have been paid and on whose behalf.

In view of the foregoing, it is therefore in the public interest that the donors who made donations to the PF ministers are known. This disclosure is in the public interest because such entities must be held accountable for their sources of income and they must also prove that they do not have any conflict of interest. Our view is that any individuals and corporate entities that have any business or other beneficial relationships with state entities through business contracts or other commercial relationship must be cleared of wrongdoing.

This statement in no way calls for wholesale disclosure of private financial affairs. This is a call limited to the transactions concerned with a matter that is public in nature, that is, the settlement of court sanctioned penalties.

Lastly, considering that the period ordered by the Court within which the repayments were to be made has expired, we wish to encourage parties to the matter to consider instituting contempt proceedings against the non-complaint parties still owing the outstanding over 29 Thousand Kwacha. Failure or refusal to abide by the ruling of a Court is a blatant disregard of our courts and the rule of law.

Issued by

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