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PRESS STATEMENT BY THE CHIEF GOVERNMENT SPOKESPERSON HON. DORA SILIYA, MP ON THE DECISIONS MADE BY CABINET AT THE 17TH CABINET MEETING (CONTINUATION) HELD AT STATE HOUSE ON WEDNESDAY, 29TH JULY, 2020

His Excellency the President Dr. Edgar Chagwa Lungu called for the continuation of the 17th Cabinet Meeting today Wednesday, 29th July, 2020 after adjourning the Meeting last week on Thursday, 23rd July, 2020. To wind up debate on the matters aimed at improving the policy/legal environment in the country, the following were the decisions made by Cabinet:

1. Media Development Policy.

Cabinet approved the Media Development Policy in order to deal with the challenges that are constraining the development of the media industry in Zambia.

As a result of liberalisation, the media industry has grown significantly and continues to do so. With this growth, comes attendant challenges that must be tackled through a comprehensive Policy framework. Challenges such as inadequate regulation, inadequate skills among media practitioners as well as inadequate media development-related infrastructure. It has become necessary to ensure a well-coordinated approach in the sector. Further, with the advent of the electronic media, the need for appropriate regulation and capacity building is cardinal for the growth of the sector.

2. National Information Communication Policy.

Cabinet also approved the National Information Communication Policy and its Implementation Plan.

The Policy aims at among other things, to address the challenges that Government is currently facing as regards intra-government communication and

communication with the public in order to enhance information flow from Government to the members of the general public and from the members of the general public to the Government. The Policy also addresses the irresponsible use of social media.

3. Zambia Council for Journalists Bill, 2020.

Cabinet further approved in principle, to the introduction of a Bill in Parliament to provide for the establishment of a self-regulatory professional body for journalists.

Stakeholders have generally complained that a phenomenon where every person feels that they can practice journalism and do so willingly without observing the minimum standards cannot go unchallenged. There is a great desire among the stakeholders to save the credibility of the media.

The establishment of the Zambia Council for Journalists will provide a legal framework for the journalism profession to thrive making it more effective and efficient. Journalists will have confidence in their work considering that they are protected and further, it will protect the profession and ensure that there is professional reporting especially with the advent of social media. The legislation will provide for soberness and sanity by the journalists.

4. Professional Film Makers Guild of Zambia Bill, 2020.

Cabinet also approved in principle, the introduction of a Bill in Parliament in order to establish the Professional Film Makers Guild of Zambia that will organise and govern the activities of actors and film makers and introduce mechanisms that will monitor quality of films.

The film industry not only provides a means for cultural preservation, but also has the potential to significantly contribute to national development. It is for this reason that Cabinet approved the National Film Policy on 19th May, 2017. The proposed piece of legislation is, therefore, expected to provide a platform which will organise and govern the activities of actors and film makers as well as monitoring the quality of films.

5. Amendment of the Teaching Profession Act No.5 of 2013.

To wind up debate for the day, Cabinet approved in principle, the introduction of a Bill in Parliament to amend the Teaching Profession Act Number 5 of 2013 in order to redefine the mandates, roles and functions of the Council and the Standards, Evaluation and Assessment Section of the Ministry of General

Education and further, harmonize them so as to enhance cost effectiveness, efficiency, and quality in the education service delivery.

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29TH JULY, 2020