

Headlines

Displacement of 800 people from farmland in Ndola condemned

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Some of the huts and mud thatched houses, which were razed down by bailiffs at Wachepa village in Chief Kapatamoyo's area of eastern province. The piece of land is owned by Kabalika Nkwengwe and recently, the court ruled in his favour to evict the villagers

Patriotic Front (PF) Member of Parliament for Bwana Mkubwa Constituency Dr. Jonas Chanda has strongly condemned the dispossession and displacement of over 800 Zambians from land they have lived and farmed on for over 26 years in Ndola's Chichele area.

He was speaking when he addressed the aggrieved families in Chichele area of Bwana Mkubwa Constituency in Ndola. Dr Chanda said the indiscriminate land displacements of Zambians to accommodate foreigners in Chichele and other parts of the country is the reason the PF government has developed the National Land Policy which will be finalised soon, and which must state that Land Ownership is a Sovereign Right of Zambians, not of Foreigners. Zambia has had no land policy since 1964.

[pullquote]**Zambians can not be displaced like animals in their own country to accommodate a foreign investor**[/pullquote]

Chairperson for the displaced families Mr Abraham Manda explained that the contested land in Chichele was a State Farm under the Dairy Produce Board in the UNIP government in the 1970s and 1980s where cattle were reared and milk was being produced. The displaced people are former casual workers and their families at the State Farm. When the MMD government came to power in the 1990s the Dairy Produce Board collapsed under the Privatization program, and a former DPB Farm Manager a Mr Mutambo was given 300 of the 3,000 hectares of land as his retrenchment package since the company had no money. The farm casual workers continued living on the rest of the farm cultivating with their families.

Mr Manda further said that when Mr Mutambo sold the land to a South African company Golden Lay who deal in chicken eggs some years back, the original land title he had was only for 300 hectares of land. Under unclear circumstances the 300 hectares land title was later changed to 3,000 hectares at Ministry of Lands offices in Ndola and then Mr Mutambo sold the entire 3,000 hectares to Golden Lay and relocated to live in the UK.

Mr Manda says thereafter the farm casual workers and their families were forcefully chased from their small farms by individuals hired by Golden Lay with support of some Police officers. Only 47 former farm workers were compensated with 200 hectares of land while the rest are still stranded. The matter has been in court several times, with the last ruling being in favour of Golden Lay Company.

In response, Dr Chanda says displacement of Zambians without compensation or alternative land is a MORAL issue, not a LEGAL issue, as Zambians can NOT be displaced like animals in their own country to accommodate a foreign investor. He says it is totally unacceptable that 800 plus Zambians are now landless in their own country when Zambia has plenty of land of 752,618 square kilometres, the 39th largest country in the world in terms of land mass with a relatively small population of about 15 million people.

He has promised the affected families that he is taking up the matter urgently with Minister of Lands Hon Jean Kapata and other Land management bodies in Lusaka as well as tabling it in Parliament until JUSTICE is done. He says there should be no displacement from land without compensation or alternative land, and condemned sale of huge tracts of land to foreigners by some unpatriotic Zambians at the expense of fellow Zambians.

Issued by:

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Bwana Mkubwa Constituency,
Ndola