



## PRESS STATEMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday 18<sup>th</sup> February, 2022

As Members of Parliament officially resume business for the First Session of the Thirteenth Assembly, the Policy Monitoring and Research Centre (PMRC) as a stakeholder in the sphere of policy and legal framework has high expectations of the Honourable Members. It is our expectation that the **Honourable Members will provide a clear road map on the legal and policy pronouncements made in the 2022 Budget speech and those contained in the Medium-Term Budget Plan 2022-2024 as well as tackle pieces of legislation that respond to the current problems the country is grappling with.** These include;

### 1. Debt Management

As of end of September 2021, Zambia's external debt stock was at \$12.99 billion while domestic debt in terms of securities and bonds and arrears being at K193 billion and K76.6 billion respectively. This debt was unsustainable and needed to be restructured in order to provide some form of relief on the economy. Additionally, the news of Zambia reaching a Staff Level Agreement with the International Monetary Fund which is expected to be finalized mid 2022 provides a basis through which Parliament must hasten the review and repeal of the **Loans, Grants and Guarantees Act Cap 366 of 1969** which is key in providing a framework for debt negotiations with its creditors as well as guide the development and implementation of the **Medium-Term Debt Management Strategy covering the period 2023-2025.**

## 2. Pensions

In the 2022 Budget speech, Government pledged to review and amend the legal framework that governs the operations of various pensions schemes to make them for suitable and responsive to the prevailing needs of the beneficiaries. Therefore, PMRC's expectations are that, the house will table the **Public Service Pensions Act Cap 260 of the Laws of Zambia, the Local Authorities Superannuation Fund Act Cap 284 of the Laws of Zambia** and the **Amended National Pensions Scheme Regulation No.7 of 2015**.

## 3. Climate Change

As the country is grappling with climate change effects that have seen the 2021/2022 season adversely affecting the agricultural sector and infrastructure, PMRC expects the House to devise a robust and progressive Climate Change Management legal framework to govern the establishment of the Climate Change Fund, framework for climate change financing especially for the private sector and how environmental assessment must be conducted.

## 4. Public Private Partnership Act No. 14 of 2009

According to the 2022 Budget speech Government plans to repeal and replace the **Public Private Partnership Act No.14 of 2009** in order to provide an enabling environment for investment from both local and foreign investors. In view of this, PMRC expects the House to consider this pronouncement in order to address the infrastructure needs of the country in view of the limited Country's resource envelope.

## 5. Access to Information Bill of 2019

As the Government is working towards improving accountability and transparency in the country, PMRC expects Members of Parliament to expedite the enactment of the **Access to Information Bill into law as a step towards empowering citizens to hold Government accountable and demand for transparency**.

## 6. Public Order Act

Zambia is a signatory to International Convention on Human Rights and the Constitution under Article 20 and 21 empowers people to enjoy the freedom of expression and assembly. These freedoms have been an issue of contention by various members of society, therefore, **PMRC expects that Parliament will review and repeal of the old and out-dated Zambia Public Order Act No. 39 of 1955** in line with international protocols and the national Constitution on the freedom of expression and assembly.

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