



STATEMENT BY THE ZAMBIA NATIONAL WOMEN'S LOBBY ON THE SOCIAL MEDIA MONITORING INITIATIVE AND WATSAPP TIP LINE AIMED AT CURBING CYBERBULLYING, HATE SPEECH AND SEXUAL HARRASSMENT AGAINST WOMEN IN POLITICS

Many countries in the world are moving towards meeting international protocols for 50 percent women participation in politics and key decision-making positions. However, Zambia seems to be dragging in attaining this goal. One of the contributing factors hindering progress is the trend of cyber bullying, sexual harassment and hate speech against women in politics.

The Zambia National Women's Lobby (ZNWL) has noted with regret increased incidents of cyberbullying against women in politics and those in decision-making positions. In order to contribute to addressing cyberbullying against women in politics, ZNWL has established a WhatsApp tip line number, **+260973591491**, to which citizens can report incidents of cyberbullying, hate speech and online sexual harassment content targeted at women in politics.

This intervention has been prompted by the increase in incidents of cyberbullying, hate speech and sexual harassment experienced by either women political leaders, or female aspiring candidates since the commencement of the 2021 electoral period.

It is our considered view as the ZNWL that if cyberbullying, sexual harassment and hate speech against women in politics is not addressed, it can reverse the gains made by the Women's Movement to encourage more women participation in politics.

To this end, the ZNWL, with help of strategic partners and other stakeholders hope to create a safe environment for women's participation in politics by raising awareness and supporting advocacy against cyberbullying, hate speech and online sexual harassment and all forms of intimidation against women in politics.

The ZNWL believes that to fight this scourge, there is need for concerted efforts to make perpetrators account for their actions while at the same time, allowing women to feel free and safe to engage social media platforms and participate in politics without intimidation.

ZNWL hopes to see an increase in the frequency of members of the public freely reporting incidents of cyber bullying, sexual harassment and hate speech through the WhatsApp Tip Line **+260973 591 491**.

ZNWL urges members of the Public to get involved because ending Cyberbullying, Hate Speech and Sexual Harassment against women in politics is every citizen's responsibility.

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