

Cabinet Approves Review Of Legislation That Allows Appointment Of PSs Into Boards



Cabinet has approved Bills and policies aimed at providing guidance on the overall management of the affairs of government for the good of the Nation.

The policies were approved during a virtual Cabinet meeting chaired by President Edgar Lungu yesterday.

Cabinet approved the review of Legislation on Appointment of Permanent Secretaries on Statutory Boards through the introduction of Bills in Parliament to review the membership by Permanent Secretaries on Boards or Committees.

Cabinet noted that the current practice of appointing Permanent Secretaries on Boards or Committees goes against the principles of good corporate governance and the very rationale for the designing and usage of the Statutory Boards.

“Permanent Secretaries are mandated by Article 184 (2), of the Republican Constitution, to design, monitor and enforce National policies which must be implemented by the Agencies. Further, Permanent Secretaries are chief advisors

of the Cabinet Ministers or Provincial Ministers, with respect to the activities, projects and programmes of the Province, Ministry or Department. To this effect, it becomes difficult for them to adequately perform their oversight role to both the Board and the Agency management. This also raises the issue of conflict of interest and maximises the principal-agency problem since they are the chief advisors of the Minister on matters, requests or proposals coming from Boards or Committees, hence the need for appropriate legislation on appointment of Boards,” chief government spokesperson Ms Dora Siliya has stated.

Cabinet has also approved the Electronic Communications and Transactions Bill, 2020, which will now be published and introduction in Parliament during the current sitting of Parliament.

“The objectives of this Bill include among others, the need to provide a safe and effective environment for electronic transactions; promotion of secure electronic signature; facilitating electronic filling of documents by public authorities; provision for the use, security, facilitation and regulation of electronic communications and transactions; promotion of legal certainty and confidence, and encourage investment and innovation in relation to electronic transactions,” Ms Siliya stated.

Another Bill approved by Cabinet for publication and introduction in parliament is the Data Protection Bill, 2020.

“The objectives of this Bill are to provide for an effective system for the use, and protection of personal data; regulate the collection, use, transmission, storage and otherwise processing of personal data; establishing the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner and provide for its functions; and provide for the registration of data controllers and licensing of data auditors,” Ms Siliya.

Cabinet has also approved the Development of the Local Content Bill, 2020.

“During the same Meeting, Cabinet approved in principle, to the introduction of the Local Content Bill in Parliament. The enactment of a Local Content Bill will support the implementation of the Local Content Strategy, which aims to promote inclusive growth and sustainable development through value addition by increased utilisation of locally available goods and services in growth sectors,” Ms Siliya stated.

Additionally, the National Productivity Policy, the first of its kind, has also been approved by cabinet for implementation.

“Cabinet observed that productivity is an overarching issue, affecting all the sectors of the economy. Therefore, in order to strengthen the existing policy framework being pursued by Government to diversify the economy through massive industrialisation and job creation, it is imperative that a National Productivity Policy is adopted to address among others, issues of low productivity, poor attitudes towards work, low human capital development, low levels of competitiveness and inadequate institutional and coordination framework,” Ms Siliya stated.

Meanwhile, Cabinet approved the appointment of Board of Directors for the Legal Aid Board.

The ten (10) member Board of Directors for the Legal Aid Board will be in office for three years.