



Mines intimidation out

■ Zambia must benefit from its resources - Lungu



PRESIDENT Edgar Lungu before departure for Chililabombwe at Simon Mwansa Kapwepwe International Airport in Ndola yesterday.
 PICTURE: STAFRANCE ZULU

**MWILA NTAMBI,
 PRISCILLA CHIPULU**
 Chililabombwe

NO AMOUNT of intimidation will prevent Zambia from taking the path it has chosen

to liberate itself from the oppression it went through after privatisation of industries, President Edgar Lungu has said.

The head of State has since assured Konkola Copper Mines (KCM) management and workers that no matter how long the litigation process takes, Government is determined to restore its sovereignty.

President Lungu was speaking when he met KCM workers in Chililabombwe yesterday.

“As far as this industry is concerned, we are going to use KCM as an example. In the past, we have been cheated and I can’t blame our predecessors, but I think this time around we are going with our eyes open,” the head of State said.

President Lungu said some issues like legal and financial problems facing KCM can be sorted out through dialogue.

He said Government will engage the right partners for the mining companies to thrive for the benefit of Zambians.

President Lungu said

Zambians have the capacity to run mines as has been demonstrated at KCM which is under liquidation.

“I want to thank you for steadying the ship and enduring the pressure that comes with running an operation of this magnitude.

“I am very proud that the mine has been running efficiently and this goes to show that as Zambians, we have the skills required to run a mine,” he said.

The President is also impressed with the commitment and zeal exhibited by KCM workers to bring the mine back to life.

President Lungu said the era of allowing foreigners to exploit Zambians is long gone.

In reference to Vedanta Resources, the erstwhile investor in KCM, the head of State said Government will not backtrack on its decision to part ways with Vedanta.

Mineworkers Union of Zambia (MUZ) president Joseph Chewe assured President Lungu of miners’ support because he has always stood with them.

Mr Chewe said MUZ has no permanent enemy or friend but merely supports anyone who stands with them in times of need.

Continues on page 4

Mines intimidation out

From page 1

KCM chief executive officer Enoch Mponda said the morale among workers is high since it was announced that the mining company would be split into two.

Mr Mponda said this is because workers are expectant of redundancy packages they are likely to get as a result of the restructuring.

And Borniface Lukashi, who spoke on behalf of the employees, said the workers appreciate President Lungu's commitment to ensuring that the mine remains afloat during the liquidation process.

Acting KCM CEO Enoch Mponda said the Chililabombwe operation requires about US\$1.1 billion in the next 10 years to raise production to 100 000 tonnes per annum from the current 30,000 tonnes per annum.

Meanwhile, President Lungu has urged mining companies to take advantage of the rising copper prices on the international market and increase production.

President Lungu said this when he visited Lubambe Mine in Chililabombwe to check on its operations.

He urged Lubambe Mine and its workers to produce more copper and contribute to improvement of the country's economy.

"I heard that the price of copper is going up. You will be asking for more and more money, so if you need more you need to work hard.

"If you don't produce more I don't see the reason why you should ask for more money. So it is up to you labour leaders to encourage your members to work hard," President Lungu said.

Lubambe Mine director for operations Tony Davis said the company has increased production by 70 percent from one million to 1.7 million tonnes of copper.

Mr Davies said the company is expected to double production in the next three years to over two million tonnes.