

we should be able to working with the farmers district to access the funds. orais.

# RSZ engages Government on sustainable way forward

By Business Reporter

THE Railway Systems of Zambia (RSZ) has taken note of concerns raised by Finance and National Planning Minister Situmbeko Musokotwane regarding the operations and it is engaging the Zambian Government to come up with a sustainable way forward that would benefit all stakeholders.

RSZ deputy general manager for corporate affairs Charles Phiri said in a statement in Lusaka yesterday that despite the barrage of negative comments on the operations of RSZ, the company would continue to invest and contribute to the well-being of the Zambian economy.

"But it is important to make it clear that although we have been under constant attacks from various spheres, we have invested more than what is enshrined in the concession agreement.

"Since the concession agreement, we have so far invested about K135 billion into the railway sector and the RSZ operations, which represents double the



•DR MUSOKOTWANE

amount specified in the agreement," Mr Phiri said.

It was RSZ's deliberate consideration that it put up in more than what was in the agreement in order to support the business potential of RSZ, which only made sense.

"Obviously there are more challenges ahead of us which cannot be addressed on a short-term basis but are being considered under the multi-annual programme and discussions with the Government.

"Our demonstrated commitment, to ensure that we make a meaningful contribution to the Zambian economy, is evidenced by

our timely settlement of all statutory obligations which include taxes and pension contributions," he said.

On Monday, Dr Musokotwane said the Government would soon determine the next course of action regarding the poor performance of RSZ.

Dr Musokotwane said the Government was greatly concerned about the operations of RSZ from the time it was concessioned a few years ago.

He said although there was a legal aspect to the concession, the Government was disappointed with the company.

The Finance minister said Zambia needed an efficient transport system that would facilitate the export of

copper and other products to the international market.

Dr Musokotwane said this at the Zambia International Trade Fair presidential pavilion in Ndola yesterday during the Copperbelt business seminar on trade and investment opportunities organised by the Zambia Development Agency.

"We are extremely concerned about the performance of the Railway Systems of Zambia. The Government will examine carefully to determine the next course of action," Dr Musokotwane said.

It would be cheaper to export goods such as copper by train, hence the need to revamp the rail transport system.

# It's back

A chance to win a share of