

## **OLD PASSPORTS FOR ZAMBIANS ABROAD VALID UNTIL 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER, 2009**

Government has extended the deadline to change over to the new digitized passports. Minister of Home Affairs Hon. Lameck Mangani announced on 8th September, 2008 that the extension had been necessitated by the numerous challenges encountered by the Passport Office in the implementation of the exercise.

Hon Mangani said that, in view of this, Government has decided to further extend the issuance of the new passports from the 31st of August to the 31st of December, 2009. The Minister added that the old passports will not be accepted after the indicated date.

He said the extension will also enable Zambians in the diaspora to obtain new ones. Mr. Mangani said Zambians abroad have had faced particular challenges in getting new passports due to the long duration between the time applications are filed at Zambian missions abroad and when they reach the passport office.

Among the reasons cited for the delays, the Minister observed that most application forms were submitted with major errors, thus making it virtually impossible for the Passport Office to issue passports accordingly. He said because of this, his ministry and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have found it necessary that passport officers should undertake clinics in the most affected countries to address the issue. He said Zambians in the diaspora will benefit from the clinics.

He said so far, the Passport Office was issuing between 800 and 1000 passports daily. To date about 110,000 new passports out of the initial target of 450,000 had been processed. This target has since been adjusted upwards to one million.