**Squatters face eviction from the land they have lived on for the past 59 years**

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ABOUT 56 people living on an abandoned Chalimbana farm face eviction from the land they have called home for the past 59 years.

This follows a decision by the legal owners of the land to engage lawyers Milner Katolo and Associates to carry out the eviction.

In a letter dated July 25 2013 on behalf of Charles N.J Murless and Lourie Estates Limited v Beauty Nyendwa and other persons unknown and obtained by the Sunday Mail addressed to one of the settlers Miss Anna Phiri, the letter read:

“We refer to the captioned matter and advise that we have firm instructions to evict you from the said farm and an order to that effect has been obtained. We therefore demand that within 7 days of this letter, you peacefully move out of the farm failure to which we shall have you evicted by the Bailiffs in which case you may lose all your assets.”

Efforts to contact the advocates went in vain as the phone was constantly engaged.

A visit by the Sunday Mail to the farm in question found despondent farm workers waiting to be addressed by Patriotic Front (PF) Lusaka District chairman Goodson Banda.

One of the earliest settlers on the farm, which is alleged to be 1,900 hectares, said his father first came to the farm in 1950 and was employed by a white owner known as Henkel.

Mr Maxwell Banda, who was born in 1954, said years later he, his siblings and relatives were all employed by the same man, who died in 1977.

He said a Mrs Pester took over the running of the farm but also died after which the son took over the estate but also died.

Mr Banda alleged that the late son’s lawyers informed his relatives in South Africa and when they came to Zambia, they told him and the other workers they would give them some land and benefits, after which they left.

But from the time the relatives left for South Africa, it is now 13 years and they have never been back, Mr Banda said.

However, much to their surprise, Mr Banda said the lawyer turned against them and told them to leave the farm as he has now bought it.

“Where are we going to go? We’ve lived here all these years, borne children here.

This is what we know to be our home. This man is taking advantage of us because we are poor. May this government help us,” he said.

And PF District Chairman Mr Banda said his government has the interest of the people at heart regardless of whether they have money or not.

Mr Banda said he would report the matter to Anti Corruption Commission (ACC) for them to investigate how the farm was bought.

He said it is not fair that after the land was abandoned for 13 years, someone can suddenly come and chase the families who held the fort all these years and were also loyal to the owners.

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