

# CUTS wants Zambeef dealt with

By *Muyunda Mwangala*

A consumer watchdog has demanded that Zambeef plc be penalised for breaching the Public Health Act Cap 295 of the Laws of Zambia, meat, abattoir, butcheries regulations, and the transport of meat regulations.

Consumer Unit and Trust Society (CUTS) Zambia Centre Coordinator Simon Ng'ona said that government needs to deal with the firm as a matter of urgency.

"All existing legal statutes which have been breached by this action ought to be considered and the fine should serve as a deterrent to those adopting similar practices and would be offenders", he said.

He said this in response to revelations by an independent verifier on selected Zambeef meat products containing aromatic aldehydes, and that the action by the beef company was distasteful and a mockery to consumer's rights.

"Right to be provided with safe products and services remain an inalienable element of human rights. By selling any products containing contaminated stuff is likely to harm citizen-consumers" Ng'ona said.

He said that there is need to strengthen regulations on labelling and divulging of full information on products and services in Zambia.

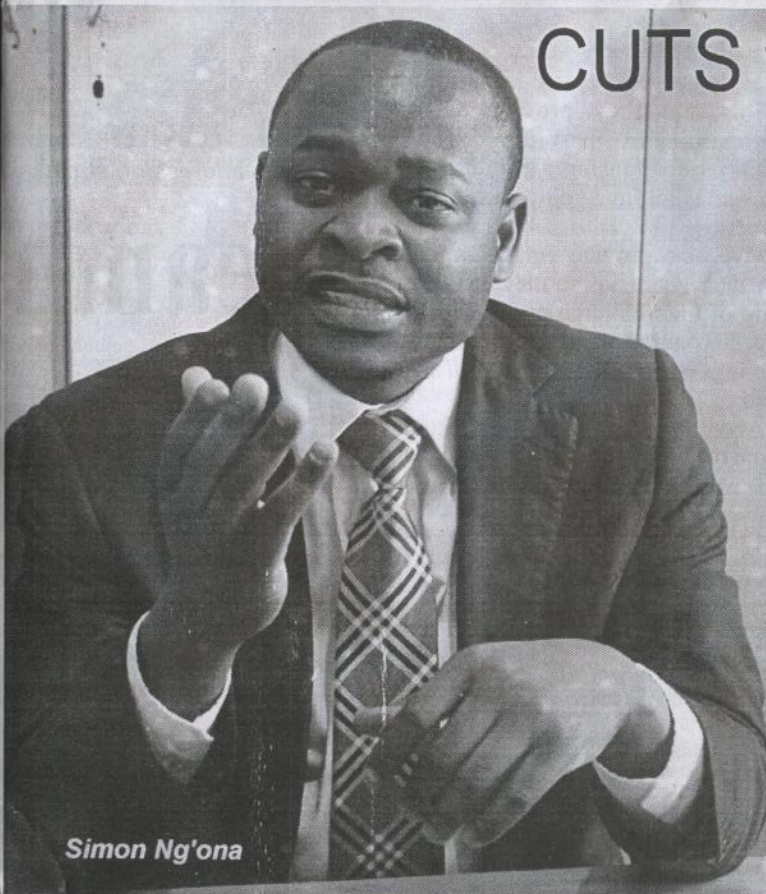
Ng'ona further said that some of the authorities tasked with the responsibility to protect consumers' interest need to wake-up from slumber and provide the much needed regulatory oversight.

"Consumer protection needs a collective action. We can't have a situation where only a few doted regulators that show devotion towards this quest while others ignore their responsibility", he said.

However, a check by the *New Vision* in some selected Zambeef retail outlets revealed that business has been badly affected following negative reports on Zambeef meat products.

Workers at some selected Zambeef outlets in Lusaka said that the only products whose sales have not been affected are products such as cooking oil, yogurts, eggs and chickens among others.

And some Lusaka residents spoken to say it will take some time before they develop interest in Zambeef meat products.



*Simon Ng'ona*