

# Govt printers set to become executive agency

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**T**he government printing press is to be transformed into an executive agency in order to make it more efficient and competitive in the printing and publishing industry.

The government printer Cassian Chibogoyo told journalists here yesterday that the process to transform the department into an autonomous agency will be completed by next year.

He said consultants are currently working on modalities on how the new body would work in the competitive printing and publishing industry, widen revenue base as well as upgrade its production technology.

Chibogoyo, who was last week elected the president of the International Government Printing and Publishing Association, said transformation of the government printer into a semi-autonomous agency also aims to improve the quality of its products.

"We would not only be competitive but also go for latest technology to produce high quality products. In a globalised and competitive world, we can't continue to operate the way we

are doing now," he said.

Executive agencies were introduced by the government in the late 1990s under the Public Service Reform Programme and are aimed to increase pace and quality of public service delivery. In 1999, some 50 government departments had been earmarked to become executive agencies. Until last month, some 20 executive agencies have been created and more are in pipeline. The plan is to have 38 executive agencies by 2011.

Chibogoyo said although the government has assisted the printing press by upgrading its equipment since 2002, it cannot continue to operate efficiently unless it is hived off the government bureaucracy.

He said continued dependence on the exchequer and government red-tape was denying the printing press opportunities to seek partners for loans and technology up-dates and hence failure to accelerate the pace of service delivery.

On last week's IGPPA conference, Chibogoyo said member states had agreed that there should be information exchange on printing and publishing technologies.