

**SPEECH FOR THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE FIFTH
SESSION OF THE ELEVENTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
BY
HIS EXCELLENCY MR. EDGAR CHAGWA LUNGU,
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA
ON FRIDAY, 18TH SEPTEMBER, 2015**

INTRODUCTION

MR. SPEAKER,

IT IS A GREAT HONOUR AND PRIVILEGE FOR ME TO ADDRESS THIS AUGUST HOUSE AND, THROUGH YOU, THE PEOPLE OF ZAMBIA.

THIS IS MY FIRST ADDRESS TO THIS HOUSE AS REPUBLICAN PRESIDENT. IT COMES IN THE WAKE OF OUR JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS LAST OCTOBER WHEN THE COUNTRY MARKED 50 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE.

THE CELEBRATIONS WERE A FITTING TRIBUTE TO OUR FOUNDING FATHERS AND MOTHERS, AS WELL AS MEN AND WOMEN WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED IN VARIOUS WAYS TO MAKE ZAMBIA WHAT IT IS TODAY.

I SAY THANK YOU TO THE MULTITUDES OF ZAMBIANS WHO TURNED UP FOR THE CELEBRATIONS ACROSS THE COUNTRY AND TO THOSE WHO CONTRIBUTED THEIR TIME, RESOURCES AND TALENTS TO MAKE OUR JUBILEE SUCH A SPECIAL OCCASION.

MR. SPEAKER,

UNFORTUNATELY, FOUR DAYS AFTER THE JUBILEE MARK, ON 28TH OCTOBER, 2014, OUR CELEBRATIONS WERE CUT SHORT BY THE SAD PASSING ON OF OUR BELOVED REPUBLICAN PRESIDENT, HIS EXCELLENCY MR. MICHAEL CHILUFYA SATA. THIS WAS A TRYING MOMENT FOR THE NATION AS WE HAD ONCE AGAIN LOST A SITTING PRESIDENT.

THE LATE PRESIDENT WAS A GALLANT LEADER WHO SERVED THE PEOPLE OF ZAMBIA SELFLESSLY AND WITH GREAT PASSION. HIS LEGACY WILL LIVE ON.

THE NATION ALSO LOST TWO MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT DURING THE FOURTH SESSION OF THE ELEVENTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. THESE WERE HONOURABLE CHIFITA MATAFWALI, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR BANGWEULU CONSTITUENCY AND HONOURABLE HUMPHREY IDDOH MWANZA, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR SOLWEZI WEST CONSTITUENCY.

MAY I REQUEST THE HOUSE TO RISE AND OBSERVE A MINUTE OF SILENCE IN HONOUR OF OUR DEAR DEPARTED PRESIDENT AND THE TWO HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT:

MAY THEIR SOULS REST IN ETERNAL PEACE!

MR. SPEAKER,

ARISING FROM THE DEATHS OF THE MENTIONED MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT, THE CHAWAMA BY-ELECTION CAUSED BY MY ELECTION AS PRESIDENT AND FROM COURT NULLIFICATIONS OF SOME OF THE SEATS WON DURING THE 2011 GENERAL ELECTIONS, BY-ELECTIONS WERE HELD IN THIRTEEN CONSTITUENCIES.

ALLOW ME NOW TO RECOGNISE THE THIRTEEN ELECTED AND TWO NOMINATED NEW MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT. I WARMLY CONGRATULATE THEM.

IT IS, HOWEVER, REGRETTABLE TO NOTE THAT INCIDENCES OF VIOLENCE RE-OCCURRED IN SOME CONSTITUENCIES DURING THE BY-ELECTIONS. I URGE POLITICAL PLAYERS TO ADHERE TO THE ELECTORAL CODE OF CONDUCT EACH TIME THERE ARE ELECTIONS.

I DIRECT THE INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF POLICE TO DEVELOP AND STRICTLY ENFORCE NEW MEASURES TO PREVENT VIOLENCE DURING ELECTIONS.

MR. SPEAKER,

IT HAS BEEN EIGHT MONTHS SINCE I ASSUMED OFFICE. LET ME TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO THANK THE PEOPLE OF ZAMBIA FOR THE SUPPORT I HAVE RECEIVED SO FAR. I LOOK FORWARD TO THEIR CONTINUED SUPPORT IN THE YEARS TO COME.

I COME TO ADDRESS THIS HOUSE AT TIME WHEN THE NATION IS FACING THE MOST CHALLENGING ENERGY SHORTAGE SINCE THE FOUNDING OF THIS GREAT NATION. THE POWER RATIONING DUE TO REDUCED WATER LEVELS IN OUR POWER-GENERATION DAMS HAS IMPACT SEVERELY ON THE LIVES OUR PEOPLE.

I HEAR THE CRY OF THAT WELDER WHOSE INCOME HAS DWINDLED DUE TO POWER LOAD-SHEDDING; THAT HAIRDRESSER, THAT CHICKEN RUNNER WHO CANNOT PUT UP WITH REPEATED POWER DISRUPTIONS...

I FEEL THE FRUSTRATIONS OF THOSE WORKSHOP MECHANICS, BARBERSHOP AND MARKET STALLS OWNERS WHOSE INCOME HAS DECLINED AS A RESULT OF POWER SHORTAGE...

I FEEL YOUR PAIN, I SHARE YOUR FRUSTRATIONS. NO ONE FEELS THE ANGUISH OF THE CURRENT POWER SHORTAGE MORE THAN I DO... THE BURDEN OF YOUR FRUSTRATIONS FALLS SQUARELY ON SHOULDERS!

BUT LET ME ASSURE THE NATION THAT MY GOVERNMENT, YOUR GOVERNMENT, HAS RAPIDLY MOVED TO ADDRESS THIS POWER SHORTAGE. I WILL LATER IN THIS SPEECH ANNOUNCE THE SPECIFIC MEASURES TO DEAL WITH THIS PROBLEM.

DURING THE FOURTH SESSION OF THE ELEVENTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, THE HONOURABLE MEMBERS DEBATED SERIOUS AND, AT TIMES, DELICATE MATTERS OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE IN A WAY WHICH UPHELD TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY. THE HOUSE CONSIDERED A TOTAL OF 847 QUESTIONS FOR BOTH ORAL AND WRITTEN ANSWERS, SEVEN PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS, 32

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE REPORTS, 47 MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS, 50 ANNUAL REPORTS AND PASSED 22 GOVERNMENT BILLS.

I WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS MY GRATITUDE TO YOU MR SPEAKER, THE HONOURABLE DEPUTY SPEAKER AND THE HONOURABLE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF COMMITTEES OF THE WHOLE HOUSE FOR THE DILIGENT, EFFICIENT AND IMPARTIAL MANNER WITH WHICH YOU

PRESIDED OVER THE BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

I ALSO THANK THE CLERK OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND HER STAFF FOR THE SERVICES RENDERED TO THE NATION.

LET ME ALSO CONGRATULATE ZAMBIA'S FIRST - EVER FEMALE LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS IN THE HOUSE, HER HONOUR MRS. INONGE WINA, MP, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA. HER ABLE LEADERSHIP IS A SOURCE OF PRIDE FOR THE HOUSE, THE COUNTRY AND AFRICA AS A WHOLE.

MR. SPEAKER,

THIS SESSION OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IS UNIQUE FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS. FIRSTLY, IT IS THE FINAL SESSION OF THE ELEVENTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BEFORE THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTIONS IN 2016. SECONDLY, IT IS DURING THIS SESSION THAT THIS HOUSE WILL BE CONSIDERING THE CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT BILL, 2015. THIRDLY, HAVING ATTAINED 50 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE, ZAMBIA HAS ENTERED A NEW PHASE OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION FOR THE NEXT 50 YEARS.

THIS IS IN TANDEM WITH THE AFRICAN UNION AGENDA 2063 WHICH HIGHLIGHTS OUR ASPIRATIONS AND I QUOTE: **"TO BUILD AN INTEGRATED, PROSPEROUS AND PEACEFUL AFRICA, AN AFRICA DRIVEN AND MANAGED BY ITS OWN CITIZENS AND REPRESENTING A DYNAMIC FORCE IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA,"** *END OF QUOTE.*

THIS COMPELS US TO REFLECT ON THE DESTINY OF OUR COUNTRY AS ORDAINED BY GOD. WE MUST APPLY OUR TALENTS TO FULFIL THAT DESTINY. LET US, THEREFORE, CREATE THE FUTURE THAT WE WANT.

THEME OF MY ADDRESS

MR. SPEAKER,

IT IS AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND THAT WE, AS A NATION, NEED TO BE ADAPTIVE, INNOVATIVE AND DETERMINED TO CHANGE THE WAY WE DO THINGS. IN THIS REGARD, THE THEME FOR MY ADDRESS IS **“EMBRACING A TRANSFORMATIONAL CULTURE FOR A SMART ZAMBIA NOW”**. TO ATTAIN THIS TRANSFORMATION, WE NEED TO CHANGE THE WAY WE THINK, BEHAVE AND DO THINGS. ZAMBIANS DESERVE THE VERY BEST AND WE ARE DETERMINED TO ENSURE THAT THIS IS ACHIEVED.

MR. SPEAKER,

OUR TRANSFORMATIONAL CULTURE SHOULD, THEREFORE, START WITH EACH AND EVERY ONE OF US GETTING INVOLVED. IN THIS TRANSFORMATION, WE MUST LEAVE THE PAST BEHIND AND EMBRACE POSITIVE ATTITUDES IN ALL OUR ENDEAVOURS. WE MUST TRANSFORM OURSELVES BY:

- (1) EMBRACING INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP;
- (2) ADOPTING A NEW PARADIGM TO RESOLVING OUR CURRENT AND

FUTURE CHALLENGES;

- (3) EMBRACING TECHNOLOGY TO SIMPLIFY AND QUICKEN PROVISION OF SERVICES;
- (4) RE-ALIGNING OUR INSTITUTIONS WHERE NECESSARY TO MAKE THEM MORE RESPONSIVE TO THE NEEDS OF THE NATION;
- (5) BEING PATRIOTIC AND PUTTING THE NATION BEFORE OUR PERSONAL INTERESTS;
- (6) PROMOTING COST EFFECTIVE OPERATIONS IN GOVERNMENT TO ELIMINATE WASTE AND ABUSE OF PUBLIC RESOURCES;
- (7) EMBRACING HIGH ASPIRATIONS AND THE COURAGE TO ACHIEVE THEM WITH A STRONG SENSE OF VISION AND MISSION;
- (8) PROMOTING AND MAINTAINING A CLEAN, HEALTHY AND SAFE LIVING AND WORKING ENVIRONMENT;
- (9) TRANSITING TOWARDS A GREEN ECONOMY;
- (10) FOSTERING WIN-WIN PARTNERSHIPS WITHIN AND OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY TO ACHIEVE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND FULFIL THE NEEDS OF OUR PEOPLE;
- (11) CREATING SMART INSTITUTIONS AND SMART BUDGETING THAT PROMOTE A WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT APPROACH TO PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY;
- (12) PROMOTING A CULTURE OF SAVING AMONG CITIZENS TO PROMOTE INVESTMENT AND GROWTH;
- (13) PROMOTING PUNCTUALITY AND EFFICIENCY TO ENHANCE PRODUCTIVITY;

- (14) PROMOTING AND NURTURING TALENT; AND, LASTLY
- (15) PROMOTING LONG-TERM PLANNING.

LET US ALL USE THIS TRANSFORMATIONAL CULTURE TO MAKE OUR COUNTRY MORE PROSPEROUS, GRADUATING FROM LOWER MIDDLE INCOME TO A DEVELOPED COUNTRY BY 2064 IN A SPIRIT OF EQUITY AND INCLUSIVENESS.

CRITICAL ISSUES FACING THE NATION

MR. SPEAKER,

I WOULD NOW LIKE TO ADDRESS CRITICAL ISSUES OUR NATION IS CURRENTLY FACING:

WE MEET TODAY AT A TIME WHEN THE NATION IS GOING THROUGH A DIFFICULT PHASE. I MEET ZAMBIANS FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE WHO SHARE THEIR FRUSTRATIONS WITH ME ON THE ON-GOING LOAD-SHEDDING, AND HOW THIS IS NEGATIVELY AFFECTING THEIR LIVES AND BUSINESSES, WHETHER BIG OR SMALL.

NO ONE IS SPARED, NOT EVEN MYSELF, A FEW DAYS AGO I WAS IN THE HEROES STADIUM WHEN THERE WAS A POWER FAILURE. I KNOW HOW IT FEELS TO COME BACK HOME AND FIND THAT THERE IS NO ELECTRICITY, OR TO SEE CHILDREN WHO CANNOT DO THEIR HOMEWORK BECAUSE THERE IS NO ELECTRICITY, OR A MOTHER WHO HAS NO ACCESS TO ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF ENERGY TO PREPARE

A MEAL FOR HER FAMILY.

I AM ALSO AWARE THAT THE CURRENT POWER SHORTAGE HAS NEGATIVELY AFFECTED THOSE RUNNING SMALL BUSINESSES LIKE SALONS, BARBER SHOPS, WELDING WORKSHOPS AND BAKERIES.

HOWEVER, THERE ARE SHORT TERM MEASURES THAT WE AS A COUNTRY CAN TAKE TO MINIMIZE THE DEMAND FOR ELECTRICITY. THESE INCLUDE

THE USE OF ENERGY SAVING BULBS, THE USE OF ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF ENERGY FOR COOKING AND HEATING. THIS WILL CERTAINLY REDUCE THE DEMAND FOR ELECTRICITY.

MR. SPEAKER,

TO CUSHION THE IMPACT OF THE POWER SHORTAGE, GOVERNMENT HAS TAKEN MEASURES WHICH INCLUDE: IMPORTATION OF ELECTRICITY FROM NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES;

ADJUSTING THE PRICE OF ELECTRICITY FOR COMMERCIAL ENTITIES TO ATTRACT INCREASED INVESTMENTS IN ELECTRICITY GENERATION;

DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF ENERGY SUCH AS SOLAR, THERMAL AND PROMOTING THE USE OF ENERGY EFFICIENT ELECTRIC BULBS.

MR SPEAKER,

APART FROM THE LOW WATER LEVELS IN LAKE KARIBA AND KAFUE RIVER THE POWER SHORTAGE HAS BEEN OCCASSIONED BY ZAMBIA'S INABILITY OVER THE YEARS TO ATTRACT NEW INVESTMENTS IN ELECTRICITY GENERATION ON ACCOUNT OF THE LOW ELECTRICITY TARRIFFS.

TO ADDRESS THIS, GOVERNMENT HAS REVISED THE TARIFFS UPWARDS FROM AN AVERAGE RETAIL TARIFF OF 5.64 TO 10.35 CENTS PER KILO WATT PER HOUR.

THIS WILL ATTRACT INVESTMENTS IN THE ENERGY SECTOR PARTICULARLY THOSE INTERESTED IN RENEWABLE ENERGY SUCH AS SOLAR, WINDAND WASTE-TO-ENERGY PROJECTS. IN VIEW OF OUR ABUNDANT DEPOSITS OF COAL, THERMAL ENERGY IN PARTICULAR IS GOING TO BE AVERY VIABLE SOURCE OF ENERGY.

I AM CERTAIN **MR SPEAKER** THAT WITH THESE MEASURE WE HAVE TAKEN, WE WILL SOON A GRADUAL REDUCTION OF POWER SHORTAGE LEADING TO AN EVENTUAL SURPLUS. INFACIT IN JUST 12 TO18 MONTHS FROM NOW, ZAMBIA SHALL BECOME A NET EXPORTER OF ENERGY!

TO PROTECT LOW INCOME HOUSEHOLDS FROM HIGH ELECTRICITY TARIFFS, A CERTAIN PROPORTION OF ELECTRICITY WILL BE RESERVED FOR LOW INCOME HOUSEHOLDS. IN THIS REGARD, GOVERNMENT HAS

INCREASED THE LIFELINE ELECTRICITY CONSUMPTION FROM 100 TO 500 KILO WATT HOUR. THIS WILL RESULT IN A REDUCTION IN THE AMOUNT OF MONEY SPENT ON ELECTRICITY BILLS BY LOW INCOME HOUSEHOLDS WHILE ENABLING THEM TO USE THE ELECTRICITY FOR BASIC NECESSITIES.

MR. SPEAKER,

HUNGER HAS BEEN STALKING SOME OF OUR PEOPLE DUE TO CROP FAILURE THAT FOLLOWED THE POOR RAINS IN THE 2014/2015 FARMING SEASON.

IN PLACES LIKE SIKONGO, THE SITUATION HAS BEEN LIKE THIS FOR THE PAST TWO CONSECUTIVE SEASONS. THE DROUGHT EXPERIENCED IN THESE PLACES MEANS THAT OUR PEOPLE FACE NOT ONLY FOOD, BUT WATER SHORTAGES AS WELL.

I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY MR SPEAKER, TO ASSURE OUR PEOPLE IN THESE DROUGHT-HIT AREAS THAT THEIR LIVES MATTER AND THAT THIS GOVERNMENT WILL NOT FORGET THEM.

GOVERNMENT HAS CARRIED OUT AN IN-DEPTH VULNERABILITY AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT IN FORTY-EIGHT DISTRICTS IN CENTRAL, COPPERBELT, EASTERN, LUAPULA, MUCHINGA, NORTH-WESTERN, SOUTHERN AND WESTERN PROVINCES.

OUR IMMEDIATE INTERVENTIONS INCLUDE PROVISION OF RELIEF FOOD

TO 131,158 HOUSEHOLDS, COVERING 798,948 PEOPLE IN 31 DISTRICTS, REHABILITATION AND SINKING OF 1,581 BOREHOLES IN ALL THE FORTY-EIGHT ASSESSED DISTRICTS AND PROVISION OF WATER SUPPLY THROUGH DAMS AND WATER SCHEMES.

GOING FORWARD, GOVERNMENT WILL PROVIDE AGRICULTURAL INPUTS TO 45,079 AFFECTED HOUSEHOLDS IN TWENTY-SEVEN DISTRICTS, STRENGTHEN CONSERVATION FARMING IMPLEMENTATION AND PROVIDE APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGIES FOR SMALL SCALE FARMERS. ADDITIONALLY, GOVERNMENT WILL STRENGTHEN EPIDEMIC

PREPAREDNESS AND SCALE UP SUPPLEMENTARY AND THERAPEUTIC FEEDING PROGRAMMES IN SELECTED DISTRICTS WHERE MALNUTRITION IS HIGH.

MR. SPEAKER,

I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO ASSURE THE NATION THAT THE COUNTRY HAS ENOUGH MAIZE STOCKS TO SUPPORT THE 2015/2016 RELIEF FOOD PROGRAMME AND THAT GOVERNMENT WILL, THROUGH THE DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND MITIGATION UNIT, ENSURE THAT ADEQUATE FOOD AND WATER PROVISIONS ARE MADE AVAILABLE TO ALL VULNERABLE HOUSEHOLDS.

IN OUR CITIES, WE HAVE THE EVER-PRESENT CHALLENGE OF CHILDREN IN DISTRESS, KIDS FORCED TO LIVE ROUGH ON THE STREETS BY CIRCUMSTANCES HARDLY OF THEIR MAKING. THESE ARE OUR CHILDREN, NIECES, NEPHEWS AND GRAND CHILDREN. AT A TENDER

AGE, THEY ARE EXPOSED TO BEGGING AND VARIOUS ANTI-SOCIAL VICES AND ABUSES WHILE EXPOSED TO THE ELEMENTS ON THE STREET AND STALKED BY PERPETUAL HUNGER AND DISEASE, WE CANNOT ALLOW THIS TO CONTINUE?

MR. SPEAKER,

IT IS TIME WE TURNED A NEW PAGE ON THE PLIGHT OF STREET KIDS. TO THIS EFFECT, I AM DIRECTING THE MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR GENDER, YOUTH, CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES TO EXPAND

THE INTAKE LEVELS OF STREET KIDS AT OUR ZAMBIA NATIONAL SERVICE CAMPS FOR SKILLS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP TRAINING. WE NEED TO GIVE THEM HOPE AGAIN AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, OPPORTUNITIES FOR A BETTER LIFE.

MR. SPEAKER,

HARDLY A DAY PASSES WITHOUT HAVING TO HEAR OR READ ABOUT INSINUATIONS OF TRIBALISM. THIS COUNTRY WAS NOT FOUNDED ON DIVISIVE THINKING OR BEHAVIOR THAT CELEBRATES DISUNITY AND ANARCHY AMONG US. IT WAS FOUNDED ON THE FIRM PRINCIPLE OF UNITY IN DIVERSITY, AND HENCE, OUR NATIONAL MOTTO, **“ONEZAMBIA ONE NATION”**.

TO THIS END, I WISH TO CALL ON ALL ZAMBIANS TO LIVE AND WORK IN

UNITY REGARDLESS OF TRIBE. THAT IS WHY I HAVE EMBARKED ON AN AMBITIOUS CRUSADE TO PROMOTE THE UNITY OF OUR PEOPLE AND OUR NATION. IN THIS REGARD, I HAVE MET AND WILL CONTINUE MEETING AND ENLISTING THE WISDOM AND SUPPORT OF OUR TRADITIONAL LEADERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS ON THIS CRITICAL ISSUE. THIS IS IMPORTANT IF OUR COUNTRY HAS TO MOVE FORWARD IN ITS SOCIO AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT.

I ALSO WISH TO ENCOURAGE OTHER POLITICAL LEADERS TO JOIN ME IN THIS CRUSADE AGAINST TRIBALISM IN OUR SOCIETY.

AS A PRACTICAL MEASURE TO RESOLVE THE ISSUE OF TRIBALISM, I AM DIRECTING THE MINISTER OF CHIEFS AND TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS TO WORK CLOSELY WITH THEIR ROYAL HIGHNESSES IN RESOLVING OUTSTANDING WRANGLES BETWEEN CHIEFDOMS. IT IS IMPORTANT TO PROMOTE EXCHANGE VISITS BETWEEN THEIR ROYAL HIGHNESSES AS WELL AS JOINT VENTURES IN UPLIFTING THE LIVES OF OUR PEOPLE.

MR. SPEAKER,

IN MY INTERACTION WITH ORDINARY PEOPLE, I AM ALWAYS REMINDED OF THE DIFFICULTIES THAT FAMILIES GO THROUGH EACH TIME THE PRICE OF MEALIE-MEAL GOES UP. YES, I FULLY UNDERSTAND THE FRUSTRATIONS OF A FARMER WHO WORKS HARD YEAR IN, YEAR OUT, AND STILL STRUGGLES TO SELL HIS OR HER PRODUCE AND HAS TO WAIT FOR MONTHS BEFORE GETTING PAID. I AM ALSO ALIVE TO THE DESPAIR FELT BY YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN CONSTANTLY SEEKING,

BUT NOT FINDING JOBS.

MR. SPEAKER,

THESE ARE NOT JUST INDIVIDUAL, BUT ALSO NATIONAL CHALLENGES THAT WE MUST RESOLVE WITH URGENCY IN OUR QUEST FOR GREATER PROSPERITY AND INCLUSIVENESS.

MR. SPEAKER,

WE ARE DEALING WITH THE HIGH COSTS OF MEALIE-MEAL BY ESTABLISHING 13 MILLING PLANTS THROUGH-OUT THE COUNTRY. THE MILLING PLANTS WILL BE MANAGED BY THE ZAMBIA COOPERATIVE FEDERATION AND THE ZAMBIA NATIONAL SERVICE. THE OBJECTIVE OF THESE MEASURES IS TO PRODUCE AFFORDABLE MEALIE-MEAL FOR THE CITIZENRY. THIS WILL ALSO BRING THE MARKET FOR MAIZE CLOSER TO THE FARMERS.

THE GOVERNMENT IS PROMOTING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE BY ESTABLISHING A SCHOOL OF MILLING TECHNOLOGY UNDER THIS INITIATIVE.

IT IS INDEED DISHEARTENING TO SEE THAT THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT IN ZAMBIA DESPITE HAVING BEEN ONCE UPON A TIME SO VIBRANT AND AN ENVY OF COUNTRIES WITHIN EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA AND BEYOND IS NOW IN A STATE WHERE IT IS NOW STRUGGLING TO MAKE ANY NOTABLE CONTRIBUTION TO OUR COUNTRY'S ECONOMY.

I AM AWARE THAT IN THE 1980S, EAST AFRICAN COUNTRIES WERE SENDING THEIR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS TO THE ZAMBIA CO-OPERATIVE FEDERATION TO UNDERTAKE A STUDY ON HOW THE ZAMBIA CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT HAD MANAGED TO REACH THAT LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT.

IT IS ALSO WORTH MENTIONING THAT DURING THIS PERIOD PRIOR TO 1991 ZCF, WAS THE NEXT LARGEST SINGLE EMPLOYER ONLY COMING THIRD TO THE CIVIL SERVICE AND ZCCM. THIS COULD HAVE MEANT THAT CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT WAS SECOND IN TERMS OF CONTRIBUTION TO THE COUNTRY'S GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP).

CAN YOU IMAGINE WHERE WE COULD WE HAVE BEEN AS A COUNTRY AND HOW MUCH WE COULD HAVE GAINED ECONOMICALLY HAD WE CONTINUED WITH THAT LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT DRIVEN BY THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT? I DO NOT UNDERSTAND THEREFORE WHY AS GOVERNMENT WE DECIDED TO DO AWAY WITH THIS IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENT VEHICLE, ALL IN THE NAME OF LIBERALIZATION.

DURING THIS ERA THE CHALLENGE OF MAIZE MARKETING OR CROP MARKETING WAS NOT AN ISSUE TO TALK ABOUT BECAUSE CO-OPERATIVES WERE ENGAGED IN MAIZE MARKETING AND CROP MARKETING IN GENERAL, BUYING MAIZE AND ALL SORTS OF CROPS FROM ALL SMALL SCALE FARMERS.

THERE WILL BE MASSIVE JOB CREATION IN ALL THE PROVINCES ONCE THE COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT HAS BEEN REVIVED TO DRIVE RURAL DEVELOPMENT

IN 1969 PRESIDENT KENNETH KAUNDA THROUGH HIS "CHIFUBU DECLARATION", DECLARED COOPERATIVES AS A MASS ORGANIZATION TO BE USED FOR MASS ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AMONGST ZAMBIANS THROUGH THE PROMOTION OF COMMUNITY BASED ENTREPRENEURSHIP AMONGST THE MANY OF OUR CITIZENS USING THE COOPERATIVE MODEL.

THERE IS NEED TO EMBARK ON THE RESTORATION PROCESS IN ORDER TO REVAMP THE CO-OPERATIVES MOVEMENT IN ZAMBIA SO THAT WE CAN HAVE A BALANCED JOB CREATION ROAD MAP COVERING THE WHOLE COUNTRY.

GOVERNMENT WILL ENDEAVOUR TO RE-INSTATE THE CO-OPERATIVE MODEL OF ENTERPRISES BY BUILDING CAPACITIES OF THE CO-OPERATIVE STRUCTURE IN THE COUNTRY SO THAT THEY STAND ON THEIR FEET AGAIN AND PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT TO MANY OF OUR WOMEN AND YOUTHS.

VIBRANT CO-OPERATIVES WORLD OVER HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO PLAY A VITAL ROLE IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT BOTH ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL. CO-OPERATIVES ARE CONTRIBUTING IMMENSELY TO ECONOMIES OF EUROPE, ASIA, AMERICA AND SOME AFRICAN COUNTRIES.

THERE IS NEED FOR US TO EMBRACE CO-OPERATIVES IN OUR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENDA. IT IS A SUSTAINABLE MEANS ADDRESSING HIGH LEVELS OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY.

MOST OF US THINK THAT CO-OPERATIVES ARE ONLY FOR AGRICULTURE RELATED ACTIVITIES SUCH AS MAIZE AND FERTILIZER. THIS IS A VERY WRONG UNDERSTANDING OF CO-OPERATIVES, CO-OPERATIVES CUT ACROSS ALL SECTORS OF AN ECONOMY.

LET ME LIST SOME OF SECTORS WHERE CO-OPERATIVES CAN GO A LONG WAY IN HELPING JOB CREATION:

- A) TRADING - CO-OPERATIVES CAN ENGAGE IN GENERAL TRADING BY OPENING MULTI-PURPOSE SHOPS
- B) TOURISM - CO-OPERATIVES CAN VENTURE INTO HOTEL BUSINESSES
- C) TRANSPORT - CO-OPERATIVES CAN VENTURE INTO BOTH PASSENGER AND COMMERCIAL HAULAGE

D) SERVICE SECTOR - OUR GRADUATING NURSES AND DOCTORS CAN FORM CO-OPERATIVES AND PROVIDE BOTH NURSING AND MEDICAL SERVICES TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC AS OPPOSED TO LOOKING FOR EMPLOYMENT IN GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS, THEY CAN FORM A NURSING CARE CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY AND BECOME PROUD OWNERS OF THAT BUSINESS. AND THIS IS TRUE FOR ALL OTHER SERVICES SUCH AS, TEACHERS, LAWYERS, ENGINEERS ETC.

WE SHALL THEREFORE ENGAGE ZCF AND PUT MEASURES THAT WILL ENSURE THAT CO-OPERATIVES ACROSS THE COUNTRY ARE REVAMPED AND IN RETURN WE EXPECT TO ACHIEVE THE FOLLOWING:

- i) MASSIVE AND BALANCED EMPLOYMENT CREATION
- ii) POVERTY REDUCTION
- iii) INCREASE IN REVENUE COLLECTION ARISING FROM AN INCREASE IN THE TAX BASE
- iv) ADDRESS THE RURAL URBAN MIGRATION CHALLENGE
- v) ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES OF AGRICULTURE MARKETING

NOW, IN ORDER TO STEER DEVELOPMENT OF ALL FORMS OF CO-OPERATIVES I HAVE DECIDED TO REMOVE THE "AGRICULTURE VEIL" FROM THE FACE OF CO-OPERATIVES BY MOVING THE DEPARTMENT OF CO-OPERATIVES FROM THE MINISTRY AGRICULTURE AND LIVESTOCK TO THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE, TRADE AND INDUSTRY.

I HAVE FOUND IT NECESSARY TO PLACE CO-OPERATIVES IN A MINISTRY WITH A GENERIC FACE RATHER THAN IT BEEN SEEN ONLY THROUGH AGRICULTURE OR ANY OTHER NARROW PERSPECTIVE.

MR. SPEAKER,

TO ADDRESS UNEMPLOYMENT FOR OUR YOUTHS AND WOMEN, GOVERNMENT IS ACTIVELY PURSUING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INDUSTRIALISATION AND JOB CREATION STRATEGY. GOVERNMENT IS ALSO IMPLEMENTING VARIOUS EMPOWERMENT SCHEMES UNDER THE MINISTRIES OF GENDER AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT; YOUTH AND SPORTS; COMMERCE, TRADE AND INDUSTRY; TOURISM AND ARTS; AND TRANSPORT, WORKS, SUPPLY AND COMMUNICATIONS. THE COMBINED PROVISION FOR EMPOWERMENT IN GENERAL IS K130 MILLION FOR 2015.

AFTER BROAD-BASED CONSULTATION, THE MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR LABOUR WILL BRING TO THIS HOUSE THE EMPLOYMENT AMENDMENT BILL AIMED AT REGULATING THE CASUALISATION OF LABOUR, SHORT-TERM CONTRACTS OF EMPLOYMENT AND UNDUE TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT.

MR. SPEAKER,

THERE HAVE BEEN CONCERNS THAT ZAMBIA IS SLIDDING BACK INTO THE DEBT TRAP. FOR AN ECONOMY THAT HAS GROWN FROM A USD 3 BILLION GDP IN 2005 TO A USD 28 BILLION TODAY, WE ARE WELL WITHIN THE ACCEPTABLE INTERNATIONAL THRESHOLD OF 40% OF THE GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT. GOVERNMENT HAS BORROWED MAINLY TO FINANCE ROADS, ENERGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE AS A LONG TERM INVESTMENT THAT WILL SPUR ACCELERATED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACROSS SECTORS. ENHANCED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WILL CREATE THE NEEDED CAPACITY TO MEET OUR

DEBT OBLIGATIONS.

TO ENSURE THAT WE REPAY OUR EUROBONDS, GOVERNMENT HAS ESTABLISHED A SINKING FUND WHICH IS A SPECIAL ACCOUNT FOR THE SOLE PURPOSE OF MEETING OUR EUROBOND OBLIGATIONS AS THEY FALL DUE.

GOVERNMENT'S STRATEGIC FOCUS TO ATTAIN THE VISION 2030 AND BEYOND

MR. SPEAKER,

GOVERNMENT REMAINS COMMITTED TO THE ATTAINMENT OF THE VISION 2030 OF BECOMING A PROSPEROUS MIDDLE INCOME NATION. BEYOND 2030, WE ASPIRE TO BE A DEVELOPED COUNTRY BY 2064 THROUGH OUR TRANSFORMATIONAL AGENDA WHICH PRIORITISES SEVEN THEMATIC AREAS. THESE ARE: DIVERSIFICATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT; INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT; HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT; DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE; GENDER AND SOCIAL PROTECTION; ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY, GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS AND NATIONAL DEFENCE; AND CULTURE RE-MODELLING.

I WILL NOW PROCEED TO DISCUSS EACH OF THESE AREAS.

DIVERSIFICATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

MR. SPEAKER,

ZAMBIA'S ECONOMY HAS BEEN REGISTERING FAVOURABLE GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT GROWTH RATE OVER THE PAST DECADE, AVERAGING AROUND 6%. HOWEVER, GOVERNMENT IS AWARE OF THE FACT THAT THERE IS NEED FOR THE ECONOMY TO REGISTER AT LEAST 10% GDP GROWTH RATE THAT CAN HAVE AN EFFECTIVE IMPACT ON REDUCING POVERTY WHICH IS CURRENTLY AROUND 60%.

OUR AIM IS TO MOVE TOWARDS A SMART ECONOMY WHICH IS CHARACTERISED BY ACCESS TO CAPITAL, MARKETS, TALENT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND, RELIABLE AND PREDICTABLE REGULATIONS. IN ADDITION, WE NEED TO PROMOTE A FUNCTIONAL CULTURE AND SOCIAL NETWORKS. FURTHERMORE, WE NEED TO PROMOTE ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS ANCHORED ON ZERO TOLERANCE TO CORRUPTION.

THE ZAMBIAN POPULATION IS PROJECTED TO REACH 52.1 MILLION IN 50 YEARS' TIME. TO ATTAIN OUR ASPIRATION TO BE A DEVELOPED COUNTRY BY 2064 AND BE ABLE TO SUPPORT A POPULATION OF THAT SIZE, THE ECONOMY NEEDS TO GROW AT A SUSTAINED DOUBLE DIGIT GDP GROWTH RATE. DOUBLE DIGIT GDP GROWTH RATE CAN BE ACHIEVED IF WE EMBARK ON STRATEGIC AND FOCUSED DIVERSIFICATION INTERVENTIONS THAT GENERATE NEW GROWTH POSSIBILITIES.

HISTORY HAS EXAMPLES OF COUNTRIES LIKE SINGAPORE AND SOUTH KOREA THAT HAVE TRANSFORMED INTO DEVELOPED COUNTRIES WITHIN A GENERATION. THIS WAS AS A RESULT OF THEIR STRONG WILL AND DETERMINATION. IT IS, THEREFORE, EQUALLY POSSIBLE FOR US TO ATTAIN THIS ASPIRATION AS LONG AS WE ARE FOCUSED AND DETERMINED AS A NATION.

TO IMPLEMENT OUR TRANSFORMATIONAL AGENDA, WE NEED A VISIONARY LEADERSHIP AT ALL LEVELS, A CLEAR MASTER PLAN FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND A MERIT BASED PUBLIC SERVICE.

MR. SPEAKER,

THE STARTING POINT IN PROMOTING DYNAMIC AND STRATEGICALLY FOCUSED DIVERSIFICATION AND RAPID GROWTH, IS REALIGNMENT OF OUR INSTITUTIONS TO PROMOTE SYNERGIES IN THE PLANNING, IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING, EVALUATION AND COORDINATION OF NATIONAL PROGRAMMES.

I HAVE, IN THIS RESPECT DECIDED TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING CHANGES:

1. THE NATIONAL PLANNING FUNCTION BE MOVED FROM THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE TO FORM THE NEW MINISTRY OF DEVELOPMENT PLANNING;
2. THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE, VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND EARLY EDUCATION BE SPLIT INTO THE MINISTRY OF GENERAL EDUCATION AND THE MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION;

3. THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, MOTHER AND CHILD HEALTH WILL BE CALLED MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AFTER ITS 'MOTHER AND CHILD HEALTH' FUNCTION IS REVERTED TO THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH;
4. THE MINISTRY OF GENDER AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT SHALL BE RE-DESIGNATED AS THE MINISTRY OF GENDER WHILE THE FUNCTION OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT MOVES TO THE MINISTRY OF YOUTH AND SPORTS WHICH NOW BECOMES THE MINISTRY OF YOUTH, SPORT AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT;
5. THE MINISTRY OF MINES, ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT WILL BE SPLIT INTO TWO: THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT; AND THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT;
6. THE MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT, WORKS, SUPPLY AND COMMUNICATION BE SPLIT INTO THE MINISTRY OF WORKS AND SUPPLY; AND THE MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION; AND
7. THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND LIVESTOCK WILL BE SPLIT INTO TWO: THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE; AND THE MINISTRY OF FISHERIES AND LIVESTOCK. THE COOPERATIVES

FUNCTION SHALL NOW FALL UNDER THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE, TRADE AND INDUSTRY AT A DIRECTORATE LEVEL. THE NAME FOR THE MINISTRY WILL REMAIN AS IT IS.

MR. SPEAKER,

IN ORDER TO COMPLIMENT GOVERNMENT EFFORTS IN THE DELIVERY OF PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE, THERE IS NEED TO WORK WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO FIND ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF FINANCING DEVELOPMENT. IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT A STRONG PARTNERSHIP IS A NECESSITY BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR AS WE SEEK TO TAP PRIVATE SECTOR RESOURCES FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT. IT IS IN THIS REGARD THAT I DIRECT THAT AN AUTONOMOUS BODY BE CREATED TO PROFESSIONALLY DEAL WITH PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP MATTERS. TO THIS END, STATE HOUSE, IN LIAISON WITH CABINET OFFICE AND RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS, MUST SPEARHEAD THE FORMATION OF THIS BODY WHICH WILL EVENTUALLY BE TRANSFERRED TO CABINET OFFICE. IT IS NOT RIGHT THAT WELL-MEANING POLICIES OF PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS CAN BE ON OUR STATUTE BOOKS FOR YEARS WITHOUT ANY TANGIBLE PROJECT SEEING THE LIGHT OF DAY. MR. SPEAKER, IT HAS BEEN SIX LONG YEARS SINCE THIS AUGUST HOUSE PASSED THE PPP ACT NUMBER 14 OF 2009. IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT I DO NOT EXPECT GOVERNMENT-RED-TAPE TO HINDER THIS PRONOUNCEMENT. I EXPECT ALL CIVIL SERVANTS IN RELEVANT SECTOR MINISTRIES TO WORK TOWARDS THE HARMONISATION OF THE LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK TO ACTUALISE THIS PRONOUNCEMENT.

MR. SPEAKER,

THE RECORD OF OUR DIVERSIFICATION PROGRAMME IN THE LAST 50 YEARS HAS NOT BEEN SATISFACTORY. ABOUT 80% OF OUR EXPORT EARNINGS STILL COME FROM COPPER, MAKING THE COUNTRY HIGHLY VULNERABLE TO FLUCTUATIONS IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY.

WE NEED TO DRAW LESSONS FROM COUNTRIES THAT HAVE SUCCEEDED IN DIVERSIFYING THEIR ECONOMIES. THERE ARE OTHER COPPER PRODUCING COUNTRIES OUT THERE THAT HAVE MANAGED

TO DIVERSIFY AWAY FROM COPPER MINING AND EXPORT BY ESTABLISHING COMPLETE NEW INDUSTRIES AND GONE FURTHER TO CREATE SOVEREIGN WEALTH FUNDS.

PRIORITISATION IS KEY TO SUCCESSFUL DIVERSIFICATION. IN THIS CONNECTION, GOVERNMENT WILL FOCUS ON PROMOTING TOURISM AND VALUE ADDITION TO MINERAL AND AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS WHICH HAVE THE GREATEST POTENTIAL TO CONTRIBUTE TO RAPID DIVERSIFICATION OF OUR ECONOMY. OUR MANUFACTURING SECTOR MUST BE DRIVEN BY GROWTH IN AGRO-PROCESSING AND FORESTRY PRODUCTS WHICH WILL ENSURE WE DO NOT EXPORT RAW MATERIALS BUT WE ADD VALUE TO ALL OUR PRIMARY PRODUCTS.

I AM, THEREFORE, DIRECTING THE MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR TOURISM AND INDUSTRY TO DEVELOP A STRATEGICALLY FOCUSED PROGRAMME OF DIVERSIFICATION IN THESE PRIORITY AREAS AND FAST-TRACK THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN TOURISM CIRCUITS WHICH HAVE HIGH POTENTIAL TO INCREASE TOURIST ARRIVALS AND EARNINGS. FURTHER, I AM DIRECTING THE MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR TOURISM AND THE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION TO SET UP A SPECIAL PURPOSE VEHICLE THROUGH WHICH ALL PUBLIC TOURISM INVESTMENT ASSETS WILL BE OWNED.

FURTHERMORE, THE TWO MINISTERS SHOULD WORK WITH LOCAL

AUTHORITIES TO PUT IN PLACE MEASURES THAT PROMOTE LOCAL TOURISM AT DISTRICT LEVEL. LOCAL AUTHORITIES SHOULD BE CHAMPIONING THE DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL TOURISM PRODUCTS IN ALL OUR TOWNS TO EXPAND FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC TOURISM.

MR. SPEAKER,

TO FURTHER PROMOTE TOURISM, THE MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR TOURISM AND ARTS WILL BRING TO THIS HOUSE THE ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE BILL AIMED AT HARMONISING INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS IN ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE TO REDUCE OVERHEADS AND PROMOTE COST EFFECTIVENESS. IN ADDITION, THE MINISTER WILL TABLE THE ZAMBIA INSTITUTE OF TOURISM STUDIES BILL AIMED AT TRANSFORMING THE HOTEL AND TOURISM TRAINING INSTITUTE TRUST INTO A COUNCIL AND MAKE IT MORE ACCOUNTABLE TO STAKEHOLDERS.

MR. SPEAKER,

ZAMBIA WILL SOON RATIFY THE TRIPARTITE FREE TRADE AREA AGREEMENT WHICH WILL MAKE US PART OF THE LARGEST FREE TRADE AREA IN AFRICA WITH A GDP OF 1.3 TRILLION UNITED STATES DOLLARS AND A POPULATION OF OVER 650 MILLION PEOPLE, STRETCHING FROM

CAPE TO CAIRO. WE ARE ALSO PART OF THE NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA WHICH WILL CREATE AN EVEN BIGGER MARKET. THESE AGREEMENTS WILL OFFER MARKET ACCESS TO ZAMBIAN ENTREPRENEURS AND INNOVATORS.

TO EXPLOIT THESE EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES, WE MUST IMPLEMENT MEASURES THAT WILL RE-SHAPE OUR EXPORT EARNINGS SO THAT NOT LESS THAN 50% OF OUR EXPORT EARNINGS COME FROM NON-TRADITIONAL EXPORTS BY 2030. THIS WILL BE ACHIEVED THROUGH TRANSFORMING THE COUNTRY FROM BEING ONE OF THE LARGEST EXPORTERS OF COPPER IN AFRICA TO BEING ONE OF THE LARGEST EXPORTERS OF VALUE ADDED PRODUCTS.

IT IS, THEREFORE, INCUMBENT ON US TO ENSURE THAT OUR PARTICIPATION IN REGIONAL INTEGRATION DOES NOT RESULT IN ZAMBIA BECOMING A MARKET FOR THE CONTINENT AT THE EXPENSE OF LOCAL INDUSTRY. WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO PRODUCE QUALITY PRODUCTS THAT WILL COMPETE FAVOURABLY ACROSS THE CONTINENT. ACCORDINGLY, OUR STANDARDS, STANDARDISATION AND QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEMS MUST BE RESTRUCTURED TO PROVIDE TRACEABILITY SERVICES THAT WILL BE RECOGNISED AND RESPECTED BY ALL OUR TRADING PARTNERS.

THE COUNTRY MUST INDUSTRIALISE RAPIDLY. THIS WILL ENTAIL RATIONALISING AND STRENGTHENING THE REGULATORY, LEGISLATIVE AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK TO MAKE ZAMBIA A PREMIER DESTINATION FOR FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT.

MR. SPEAKER,

THE MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR INDUSTRY WILL BRING TO THIS HOUSE, THE ZAMBIA DEVELOPMENT AGENCY BILL AIMED AT ALIGNING IT WITH

THE NEW INDUSTRIAL POLICY. FURTHER, A NEW COMPANIES BILL WILL BE PRESENTED TO THIS HOUSE AIMED AT STRENGTHENING CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND PROVIDING FOR THE START-UP AND FUNCTIONING OF SMALL COMPANIES.

ACCESS TO CAPITAL IS A CHALLENGE FOR MOST OF OUR ENTREPRENEURS AND INNOVATORS WHO WISH TO ESTABLISH OR GROW THEIR BUSINESSES. THE COST OF CAPITAL NEEDS TO BE MADE AFFORDABLE. I, THEREFORE, URGE THE MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR FINANCE TO PUT IN PLACE MEASURES THAT WILL ALLOW FOR LONG TERM FINANCING AT AFFORDABLE RATES. I ALSO CALL UPON THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO ESTABLISH VENTURE CAPITAL FUNDS THAT WILL FACILITATE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF GREENFIELD INVESTMENTS.

LET ME URGE THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO PARTNER WITH GOVERNMENT TO PROMOTE BUSINESS INCUBATION TO ENABLE OUR YOUNG INNOVATORS COMMERCIALISE THEIR IDEAS.

AGRICULTURE

MR. SPEAKER,

WITH ITS VAST ARABLE LAND AND ABUNDANT WATER, ZAMBIA HAS THE POTENTIAL TO ATTAIN LASTING FOOD SECURITY AT THE HOUSEHOLD

AND NATIONAL LEVELS. WE CAN ALSO CAPITALISE ON THESE RESOURCES TO MAKE OUR COUNTRY A REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL HUB AND GLOBAL EXPORTER OF PROCESSED AGRICULTURAL

PRODUCTS.

TO TRANSFORM THIS POTENTIAL INTO COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE, GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE INTRODUCING A BROAD RANGE OF POLICY REFORMS IN THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR STARTING WITH CROP DIVERSIFICATION.

AS A PUSH FOR CROP DIVERSIFICATION, THE RANGE OF CROPS IN THE FARMER INPUT SUPPORT PROGRAMME HAS BEEN EXPANDED FROM MAIZE TO INCLUDE RICE, SORGHUM, COTTON AND GROUNDNUTS. FURTHER THE NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES HAS INCREASED FROM 500,000 IN 2013/2014 AGRICULTURAL SEASON TO 1,000,000 THIS SEASON.

GOVERNMENT IS IN THE PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTING THE ELECTRONIC VOUCHER SYSTEM IN THE DISTRIBUTION OF SUBSIDISED SEED AND FERTILISER INITIALLY ON A PILOT BASIS IN 13 DISTRICTS DURING THE 2015/2016 AGRICULTURAL SEASON.

TO PROMOTE EFFICIENCY AND COST EFFECTIVENESS IN THE SUPPLY AND DISTRIBUTION OF INPUTS UNDER THE E-VOUCHER, FARMERS WILL SOURCE INPUTS DIRECTLY FROM AGRO DEALERS. THE E-VOUCHER WILL ALSO GIVE FARMERS A WIDER CHOICE OF INPUTS INCLUDING THOSE OF LIVESTOCK AND FISHERIES.

MR. SPEAKER,

GOVERNMENT IS CONCERNED BY THE INABILITY OF FARMER INPUT SUPPORT PROGRAMME BENEFICIARIES TO BECOME SELF- SUSTAINING.

OUR OBJECTIVE IS TO HELP OUR SMALL SCALE FARMERS BECOME SELF-SUFFICIENT AND EVENTUALLY GRADUATE FROM GOVERNMENT SUPPORT.

TO THIS END, I AM, DIRECTING THE MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR FINANCE AND AGRICULTURE TO COME UP WITH A MECHANISATION PROGRAMME FOR SMALL-SCALE FARMERS WORKING IN COLLABORATION WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND CIVIL SOCIETY.

FOR AGRICULTURE TO BE TRANSFORMED, WE NEED TO ADDRESS THE HIGH COST OF AGRICULTURAL INPUTS. OUR DEPENDENCE ON IMPORTED INPUTS MAKES OUR FARMERS UNCOMPETITIVE IN THE REGION. LOCAL PRODUCTION OF INPUTS IS CRITICAL IN CONTROLLING AND MANAGING COSTS. THEREFORE, GOVERNMENT REMAINS COMMITTED TO ENSURING THE SUCCESS OF NITROGEN CHEMICALS OF ZAMBIA AND OTHER PRIVATE SECTOR MANUFACTURERS IN ORDER TO BROADEN THE COUNTRY'S MANUFACTURING BASE FOR AGRICULTURAL INPUTS. I CALL UPON THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO INVEST IN THE PRODUCTION OF FERTILISER AND OTHER AGRICULTURAL INPUTS.

MR. SPEAKER,

IN 2014, THE FOOD RESERVE AGENCY PURCHASED 1,031,303 METRIC TONNES OF MAIZE AND 1,115 METRIC TONNES OF PADDY RICE AT A

COST OF 1.4 BILLION KWACHA. GOVERNMENT'S OBJECTIVE IS TO LEAVE THE BULK OF COMMODITY TRADING TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

IN THIS REGARD, I AM ENCOURAGING FARMERS TO FORM PRODUCER AND MARKETING COOPERATIVES TO ENABLE THEM NEGOTIATE FROM POSITIONS OF STRENGTH WHEN DEALING WITH PRIVATE AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY TRADERS.

I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO CALL UPON THE MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR COOPERATIVES TO COME UP WITH MEASURES TO STRENGTHEN THE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR COOPERATIVES IN THE COUNTRY. LET ME TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO THANK THE HARD WORKING ZAMBIAN FARMERS WHO HAVE YET AGAIN MET THE CHALLENGE OF PRODUCING ENOUGH FOOD TO FEED OUR PEOPLE. THIS WAS DESPITE A PARTIAL DROUGHT THAT AFFECTED MOST PARTS OF THE COUNTRY. IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT THE GRAIN PRODUCED UNDER VERY DIFFICULT WEATHER CONDITIONS SHOULD BE SAFE-GUARDED AND STORED IN APPROPRIATE STORAGE FACILITIES TO AVOID WASTAGE. GOVERNMENT, THROUGH THE FOOD RESERVE AGENCY, HAS EMBARKED ON PROVIDING OVER-ROOFING FACILITIES FOR STORAGE SHEDS IN 98 STRATEGIC LOCATIONS ACROSS THE COUNTRY. THIS PROJECT WHICH IS UNDER WAY IS EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED IN 2016.

MR. SPEAKER,

TO MITIGATE THE ADVERSE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON AGRICULTURE, GOVERNMENT WILL BRING 5,000 HECTARES UNDER IRRIGATION EACH YEAR.

BY 2030, WE SHOULD HAVE OVER 75,000 HECTARES UNDER

IRRIGATION. THIS WOULD PLACE A FIFTH OF IRRIGABLE LAND UNDER IRRIGATION AND EXPAND PRODUCTION. IN THIS RESPECT, I URGE THE MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR AGRICULTURE TO ENSURE SPEEDY UTILISATION OF THE 115 MILLION UNITED STATES DOLLARS UNDER THE IRRIGATION DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT PROGRAMME.

MR. SPEAKER,

LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT IS CRITICAL TO DIVERSIFICATION. TO INCREASE THE POPULATION OF LIVESTOCK, GOVERNMENT WILL DOUBLE THE NUMBER OF LIVESTOCK BREEDING CENTRES FROM THE CURRENT TEN TO TWENTY BY 2023 WHICH WILL PROVIDE OPTIMUM SERVICES NATIONWIDE. THE BREEDING CENTRES TO BE ESTABLISHED WILL BE MOSTLY FOR GOATS AND SHEEP, WHICH HAVE A HUGE MARKET IN AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST.

THERE IS RAPID DEPLETION OF FISH IN OUR RIVERS AND LAKES DUE TO INTENSIVE AND UNSUSTAINABLE HARVESTING. GOVERNMENT IS INVESTING IN SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF THE NATURAL FISHERIES

RESOURCES THROUGH RESTOCKING AND WORKING WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE FISHING METHODS.

TO ENSURE THAT FISH FARMING GROWS, GOVERNMENT IS ESTABLISHING TWO FISH HATCHERIES IN EACH PROVINCE AND PROMOTING PRIVATE-OWNED HATCHERIES. FURTHER, GOVERNMENT WILL ESTABLISH ONE COMMUNITY FISH FINGERLING NURSERY IN EACH DISTRICT. GOVERNMENT WILL ALSO TRAIN 1,400 FISH FARMERS IN FISH

FEED PRODUCTION. THIS WILL RESULT IN PRODUCTION OF 80,000 TONNES OF FARMED FISH AND 90,000 TONNES OF FISH FROM NATURAL FISHERIES AND ACHIEVE SELF-SUFFICIENCY WITHIN THE NEXT THREE YEARS.

MR. SPEAKER,

GOVERNMENT HAS A DUTY TO ENSURE THAT AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS BEING SOLD ON OUR MARKET ARE SAFE AND OF GOOD QUALITY. I AM, THEREFORE, DIRECTING THE MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR AGRICULTURE AND TRADE TO ENSURE THAT SANITARY AND PHYTO-SANITARY STANDARDS ARE STRENGTHENED AND STRICTLY ENFORCED.

OUR DIVERSIFICATION AGENDA WILL NOT BE COMPLETE WITHOUT AGRO PROCESSING. I AM ENCOURAGED BY THE EFFORTS OF SOME PRIVATE SECTOR AGRO PROCESSORS WHO ARE NOW EXPORTING TO PARTS OF AFRICA, EUROPE AND ASIA. I WOULD, HOWEVER, LIKE TO SEE AN INCREASED NUMBER OF AGRO PROCESSING COMPANIES ESTABLISH BUSINESS IN ZAMBIA.

I AM EXTREMELY CONCERNED WITH THE LACK OF PROGRESS ON FARM BLOCK DEVELOPMENT. I AM, IN THIS REGARD, DIRECTING THE MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRY WORKING IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, TO COME UP WITH URGENT MEASURES TO SPEED UP

FARM BLOCK DEVELOPMENT.

BROAD-BASED CITIZENS ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

MR. SPEAKER,

GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO INCLUSIVE GROWTH. AS PART OF THE TRANSFORMATIONAL AGENDA, OUR ECONOMY MUST PROGRESSIVELY BE CONTROLLED BY CITIZENS. GOVERNMENT WILL, THEREFORE, PRIORITISE BROAD-BASED CITIZEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT. GOVERNMENT SHALL, IN THIS REGARD, PUT IN PLACE INTERVENTIONS THAT WILL ENSURE THAT CITIZENS HAVE SIGNIFICANT CONTROL OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES IN THE AGRICULTURE, TOURISM AND MANUFACTURING SECTORS. THIS WILL BE ACHIEVED THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS AND JOINT VENTURES BETWEEN FOREIGN INVESTORS AND CITIZENS.

WE MUST, THEREFORE, FACILITATE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE FINANCE, TECHNOLOGY AND ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS FOR OUR PEOPLE TO EFFECTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN JOINT VENTURES AND PARTNERSHIPS. OUR CITIZENS ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME MUST BE REFORMED TO HELP ZAMBIANS ESTABLISH SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES.

GOVERNMENT IS A MAJOR CONSUMER OF GOODS AND SERVICES IN THE ECONOMY. DESPITE MEASURES TO ADVANTAGE CITIZEN-OWNED ENTERPRISES THROUGH PREFERENTIAL PROCUREMENT, MANY OF OUR SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES STILL LACK THE CAPACITY TO DELIVER QUALITY PRODUCTS AND SERVICES AT COMPETITIVE PRICES. I

AM, THEREFORE, DIRECTING THE MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR COMMERCE TO COME UP WITH MEASURES FOR CAPACITY BUILDING OF OUR CITIZEN-OWNED ENTERPRISES TO BECOME MORE COMPETITIVE.

MR. SPEAKER,

ANOTHER MEASURE TO EMPOWER OUR CITIZENS IS TO ENABLE THEM OWN SHARES IN SOME OF THE STATE-OWNED COMPANIES IN THE COUNTRY. THE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION WILL BE AN IMPORTANT TOOL IN ACHIEVING THIS GOAL. ALL STATE-OWNED ENTERPRISES MUST ULTIMATELY LIST ON THE LUSAKA STOCK EXCHANGE WITHIN THE NEXT FIVE TO TEN YEARS SO THAT WE CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CITIZENS TO OWN THESE COMPANIES.

GOVERNMENT HAS TRANSFERRED ITS SHARES IN ALL STATE-OWNED ENTERPRISES INCORPORATED UNDER THE COMPANIES' ACT AND THE BANKING AND FINANCIAL SERVICES ACT TO THE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION. THE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION WILL HOLD THE SHARES ON BEHALF OF GOVERNMENT AND SUPERVISE THESE STATE-OWNED ENTERPRISES.

IN THIS REGARD, STATE-OWNED ENTERPRISES WILL NO LONGER BE FUNDED THROUGH THE NATIONAL BUDGET. THIS ACTION WILL REDUCE THE BURDEN ON THE TREASURY SIGNIFICANTLY AND HELP CONTAIN THE FISCAL DEFICIT WHILST FREEING UP THE AVAILABLE SCARCE RESOURCES TOWARDS POVERTY REDUCTION PROGRAMMES. ALL

STATE-OWNED ENTERPRISES SHALL CONTRIBUTE TO THE SOVEREIGN WEALTH FUND THROUGH DIVIDENDS.

EMPLOYMENT AND PRODUCTIVITY

MR. SPEAKER,

IN OUR EFFORT TO DIVERSIFY THE ECONOMY AND CREATE JOBS, GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO ENSURING THAT OUR PEOPLE HAVE ACCESS TO DECENT JOBS. IN THE LAST FOUR YEARS, THE ECONOMY HAS CREATED OVER 480,000 JOBS IN VARIOUS SECTORS. HOWEVER, TOO MANY OF OUR PEOPLE STILL REMAIN OUTSIDE THE FORMAL SECTOR.

IT IS, THEREFORE, NECESSARY THAT GOVERNMENT, WORKING WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR ENHANCES THE FORMALISATION OF THE ECONOMY SO THAT MANY OF OUR PEOPLE CAN HAVE ACCESS TO DECENT JOBS. OUR DIVERSIFICATION AGENDA MUST, THEREFORE, INCLUDE A SET OF MEASURES THAT WILL FACILITATE THE FORMALISATION OF MICRO AND SMALL BUSINESS IN ALL SECTORS.

GOVERNMENT IS IMPLEMENTING MEASURES THAT WILL RESULT IN STREET VENDORS FORMING COOPERATIVES IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT. THESE COOPERATIVES WILL PARTICIPATE IN INTERVENTIONS SUCH AS PAVE ZAMBIA 2000 AND ESTABLISHMENT OF INDUSTRIAL CLUSTERS.

FURTHER, GOVERNMENT WILL INVEST IN CAPACITY BUILDING OF THESE COOPERATIVES TO ENSURE THAT THE WORK IS DURABLE AND OF GOOD QUALITY.

MR. SPEAKER,

THE TRANSFORMATION AGENDA REQUIRES WORKER PRODUCTIVITY TO SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVE. THIS, THEREFORE, CALLS FOR CHANGE IN WORK CULTURE.

GOVERNMENT IS, THEREFORE, COMMITTED TO HAVING A PRODUCTIVE WORKFORCE AS A PRECONDITION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVED WELL-BEING OF THE PEOPLE. GOVERNMENT HAS ESTABLISHED THE KAIZEN INSTITUTE AND IS ALSO CONSIDERING ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL PRODUCTIVITY CENTRE WHICH WILL PROMOTE CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT THROUGHOUT THE ECONOMY.

TO MAKE USE OF THE KAIZEN INSTITUTE, I HAVE DIRECTED THE SECRETARY TO THE CABINET TO ENSURE THAT CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT IS INSTITUTIONALISED IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE.

ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE

MR. SPEAKER,

DESPITE THEIR ECONOMIC POTENTIAL AND DYNAMIC NATURE, THE ARTS, AND CULTURE SECTORS HAVE THUS FAR, BEEN EITHER OVERLOOKED BY POLICYMAKERS OR INADEQUATELY ADDRESSED WITH

PIECEMEAL OR TRADITIONAL APPROACHES. THIS HAS CREATED A CHALLENGE IN THE AREA OF COORDINATION, PROPER PLANNING AND OPTIMAL RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND APPLICATION. CONSEQUENTLY, OPPORTUNITIES HAVE LARGELY NOT BEEN EFFECTIVELY UTILISED IN NOT ONLY CREATING A VIBRANT NATIONAL IDENTITY, BUT ALSO IN TAPPING INTO A SECTOR THAT CAN CONTRIBUTE MEANINGFULLY TO OUR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND MAJOR CONTRIBUTOR TO THE JOB OR CAREER MARKET.

THE COORDINATION OF LEGISLATIVE REGULATIONS, LICENSES, POLICIES AND CONVENTIONS HAVE PROVED TO BE A CHALLENGE AND SOMETIMES AN OBSTACLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS SECTOR. SOME OF THESE REGULATION AND POLICY CHALLENGES HAVE PROVED TO PLAY A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN THE APPARENT DISCONNECT BETWEEN THE ARTS AND CULTURAL SECTOR FROM THE LARGER ECONOMIC & DEVELOPMENT SECTOR.

THE PF GOVERNMENT IS THINKING CREATIVELY AND BOLDLY ABOUT USING ALL THE PILLARS OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY. THE DECISION FOR THIS GOVERNMENT TO USE TOURISM, THE ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE AS ONE OF THE VEHICLES FOR LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND JOB CREATION, IS A BOLD AND PROGRESSIVE ONE. THIS DECISION IS IN ADDITION TO BUILDING ON OUR ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE FOUNDATION FOR A SOLID NATIONAL BRAND AND IMAGE THAT ALSO UNDERSCORES AND EMBRACES OUR HERITAGE AND CULTURE OF PEACE AND UNITY.

I TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO EMPHASISE THAT OUR CULTURE & HERITAGE IS A NATIONAL ASSET AND THE CORNERSTONE OF OUR NATIONAL IDENTITY. IT MUST BE SAID THAT THIS INTERVENTION IS NOT

ONLY ENTIRELY IN LINE WITH THE PF MANIFESTO ON THE CREATIVE SECTOR, BUT ALSO WITHIN THE CURRENT STRATEGIC FRAMEWORKS THAT ARE BEING ADOPTED BY PROGRESSIVE GOVERNMENTS THE WORLD OVER.

AS THE PF GOVERNMENT, WE HAVE REMAINED COMMITTED TO OUR INTENTION TO PLACE THE CREATIVE ECONOMY IN A STRONG POSITION TO CONTRIBUTE TO GOVERNMENTS EFFORTS TO GROW THE ECONOMY, CREATE JOBS AND BUILD SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS.

IN HIS SPEECH DURING THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE SECOND SESSION OF THE ELEVENTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ON FRIDAY, 21ST SEPTEMBER, 2012, OUR LATE PRESIDENT, MR. MICHEAL CHILUFYA SATA, DIRECTED THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND ARTS TO ESTABLISH THE NATIONAL ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE COMMISSION IN LINE WITH THE PATRIOTIC FRONT (PF) MANIFESTO. THAT DIRECTIVE WAS INTENDED TO ACCELERATE THE CREATIVE INDUSTRY'S CONTRIBUTION TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AMONG OTHER CONSIDERATIONS.

IN THIS REGARD, THE REPEAL OF THE NATIONAL ARTS COUNCIL OF ZAMBIA ACT, NO. 31 OF 1994, IS FUNDAMENTAL TO THE SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DIRECTIVE.

I AM HAPPY TO INFORM YOU MR SPEAKER, AND HONORABLE MEMBERS, THAT MY GOVERNMENT WITH THE INPUT OF STAKEHOLDERS IN THE CREATIVE INDUSTRY, HAS WORKED HARD TO PRODUCE THE DRAFT CULTURE AND HERITAGE BILL WHICH WILL BE BROUGHT TO YOUR ATTENTION BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR.

THIS HOUSE HAS ALREADY SUPPORTED THE INITIAL FUNDING TO CREATE A NATIONAL ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE COMMISSION AS REFLECTED IN THE 2015 BUDGET IN WHICH AN AMOUNT OF K3,500,000

WAS APPROVED BY THIS PARLIAMENT FOR THIS PURPOSE. THE NEWLY CREATED COMMISSION WILL IMPROVE THE COORDINATION, ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT OF ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE SECTOR IN THIS

COUNTRY AND REFLECT OUR COLLECTIVE COMMITMENT TO BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE, ECONOMICALLY PRODUCTIVE DESTINY FOR ALL THE PEOPLE OF ZAMBIA.

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

MR. SPEAKER,

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT IS A CATALYST FOR ZAMBIA'S TRANSFORMATION TO A DEVELOPED COUNTRY BY 2064. IN THIS REGARD, GOVERNMENT REMAINS FIRMLY COMMITTED TO RAPIDLY DEVELOPING OUR INFRASTRUCTURE. IN RECOGNISING THAT INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT CUTS ACROSS ALL SECTORS, GOVERNMENT WILL TRANSFORM ZAMBIA INTO A HUB IN AREAS OF INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY, POWER GENERATION AND DISTRIBUTION, TOURISM AND TRANSPORT FACILITATION, AMONG OTHERS.

WHILE INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT REMAINS A PRIORITY, GOVERNMENT RECOGNISES THAT FINANCING REMAINS A KEY CHALLENGE.

IT IS, IN THIS REGARD, THAT GOVERNMENT IS EXPLORING INNOVATIVE MEANS OF FINANCING CAPITAL PROJECTS INCLUDING PUBLIC

PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS.

TO FACILITATE INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF INFRASTRUCTURE, GOVERNMENT WILL REVIEW INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS TO MAKE IT MORE RESPONSIVE TO CURRENT AND FUTURE INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS.

LET ME NOW ADDRESS SPECIFIC INFRASTRUCTURE ISSUES THAT GOVERNMENT HAS PRIORITISED TO DRIVE OUR TRANSFORMATION AGENDA.

TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

MR. SPEAKER,

ZAMBIA'S GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION MAKES IT A NATURAL TRANSPORT HUB AND TRANSIT POINT WITHIN THE SUB-REGION AND BEYOND. IT IS, THEREFORE, GOVERNMENT'S GOAL TO ENSURE THAT ZAMBIA BECOMES THE PREFERRED TRANSIT POINT IN THE REGION. TO ACHIEVE THIS, GOVERNMENT IS INVESTING IN ROAD, RAIL, AIR AND WATER TRANSPORTATION.

GOVERNMENT WILL DEVELOP AN INTEGRATED, RELIABLE AND EFFICIENT TRANSPORT SYSTEM TO LEVERAGE ITS CENTRAL LOCATION TO ENSURE THAT 25% TO 30% OF ALL CARGO TRAFFIC SOUTH OF THE EQUATOR IS PROCESSED THROUGH ZAMBIA BY 2064.

CONSEQUENTLY, GOVERNMENT IS DEVELOPING A TRANSPORT MASTER PLAN WHICH WILL ENSURE THAT THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE

TRANSPORT SYSTEM IN ZAMBIA IS DONE IN AN INTEGRATED MANNER LINKING AIRPORTS, HARBOURS, DRY PORTS AND TRADE CENTRES. THIS WILL ENSURE THAT GOODS AND SERVICES ARE EASILY TRANSPORTED TO MARKETS WITHIN THE COUNTRY AND BEYOND.

MR. SPEAKER,

IN THE ROAD SECTOR, GOVERNMENT WILL ACCELERATE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ROAD PROJECTS UNDER THE LINK ZAMBIA 8,000 PROJECT AS A MEANS OF IMPROVING CONNECTIVITY AND TRANSPORTATION OF GOODS AND SERVICES.

THIS WILL BE DONE BY UTILISING THE PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS TO FINANCE SELECTED ROADS. TO THIS END, GOVERNMENT HAS IDENTIFIED SIX COMMERCIALY VIABLE ROADS TO BE CONSTRUCTED UNDER THE PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP FINANCING MODALITY, WITH A TOTAL ESTIMATED LENGTH OF 2,200 KILOMETRES. THIS WILL BE IN ADDITION TO THE 2,700 KILOMETRES UNDER IMPLEMENTATION IN PHASE I OF THE LINK ZAMBIA 8,000 ROAD PROJECT.

GOVERNMENT IS IN A HURRY TO COMPLETE THE ROAD PROJECTS ON TIME. TO THIS END, I AM DIRECTING THE MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR FINANCE AND TRANSPORT, TO ENSURE THAT THE FINANCING MODALITIES ARE STREAMLINED.

FURTHER, GOVERNMENT WILL REVIEW THE OPERATIONS OF THE ROAD DEVELOPMENT AGENCY WITH A VIEW TO ENHANCING ITS EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY IN FACILITATING CONSTRUCTION

AND MAINTENANCE OF ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE.

MR. SPEAKER,

GOVERNMENT WILL COMMENCE THE REHABILITATION AND CONSTRUCTION OF TOWNSHIP ROADS ON THE COPPERBELT THROUGH THE C400 ROAD PROJECT COVERING 408 KILOMETRES.

A SIMILAR PROJECT, THE LUSAKA L400 ROAD PROJECT IS PROGRESSING WELL AND SO FAR 147 KILOMETRES HAVE BEEN SURFACED. THESE PROJECTS WILL RESULT INTO DECONGESTION OF TRAFFIC AND LEAD TO EFFICIENT TRANSPORTATION OF GOODS AND SERVICES.

TO SAFEGUARD THE HIGH INVESTMENTS IN THE ROAD SECTOR, GOVERNMENT HAS DEVELOPED AND IS IMPLEMENTING THE ROAD MAINTENANCE STRATEGY WHICH RUNS FROM 2015 TO 2024. TO ENSURE THAT FINANCING FOR ROAD MAINTENANCE AND REHABILITATION IS READILY AVAILABLE, GOVERNMENT COMMENCED THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ROAD TOLLING PROGRAMME IN 2013. SO FAR, K545 MILLION HAS BEEN RAISED USING EXISTING WEIGH-BRIDGES.

I AM DIRECTING THE MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSPORT TO ACCELERATE THE CONSTRUCTION OF TOLL-GATES ON OUR MAJOR HIGH WAYS IN ORDER TO IMPROVE REVENUE GENERATION FOR ROAD MAINTENANCE.

MR. SPEAKER,

THE COMBINED INSTALLED FREIGHT CAPACITIES FOR THE ZAMBIA

RAILWAYS AND TANZANIA-ZAMBIA RAILWAY AUTHORITY IS EIGHT MILLION TONNES PER YEAR. IN ORDER TO FULLY UTILISE THIS CAPACITY TO TRANSPORT FREIGHT TO AND FROM THE SEA PORTS, GOVERNMENT HAS CONTINUED TO INVEST IN THE RAILWAY SECTOR. THIS IS A MORE SUSTAINABLE STRATEGY TO ENSURE COMPETITIVENESS AND PREVENT THE TRANSPORTATION OF HEAVY GOODS ON THE ROADS.

IN LINE WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF TRANSFORMING ZAMBIA INTO A REGIONAL HUB, GOVERNMENT HAS IDENTIFIED A NUMBER OF GREENFIELD RAILWAY PROJECTS WHICH WILL LINK ZAMBIA TO THE EASTERN AND WESTERN PORTS OF AFRICA.

THESE INCLUDE THE NSELUKA - MPULUNGU SPUR LINKING ZAMBIA TO THE GREAT LAKES REGION; THE LIVINGSTONE - KATIMA MULILO SPUR LINKING ZAMBIA TO THE WALVIS BAY PORT IN NAMIBIA; THE SERENJE VIA PETAUKE SPUR LINKING ZAMBIA TO THE PORT OF NAMPULA IN MOZAMBIQUE; AND CHINGOLA - JIMBE RAILWAY NETWORK LINKING ZAMBIA TO LOBITO BAY IN ANGOLA. GOVERNMENT IS EXPECTED TO INVEST ABOUT SIX BILLION UNITED STATES DOLLARS TO CONSTRUCT THESE GREENFIELD RAILWAY LINES. THE IMPLEMENTATION AND COMPLETION OF THESE PROJECTS WILL NOT ONLY CONTRIBUTE TO INCREASED REVENUE GENERATION FOR ZAMBIA BUT WILL ALSO CONTRIBUTE TO JOB CREATION.

MR. SPEAKER,

GOVERNMENT HAS ALSO PRIORITISED THE CONSTRUCTION AND

REHABILITATION OF FEEDER ROADS AS THESE FORM THE BASIS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL AREAS. IN ORDER TO ACCELERATE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL FEEDER ROADS PROGRAMME, GOVERNMENT HAS TRANSFERRED THE FUNCTIONS OF THE RURAL ROADS UNIT TO THE ZAMBIA NATIONAL SERVICE.

FURTHER, THE ZAMBIA NATIONAL SERVICE HAS BEEN APPOINTED AS A LOCAL ROAD AUTHORITY AND MANDATED TO REHABILITATE APPROXIMATELY 10,000 KILOMETRES OF PRIMARY FEEDER ROADS OVER A PERIOD OF FOUR YEARS.

MR. SPEAKER,

GOVERNMENT REMAINS COMMITTED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF INLAND WATERWAYS TO PROMOTE EFFICIENT AND SAFE WATER TRANSPORTATION. GOVERNMENT HAS PROCURED SOME CARGO AND PASSENGER VESSELS AS WELL AS MARINE PATROL BOATS TO BE DISTRIBUTED TO DESIGNATED AREAS. GOVERNMENT HAS ALSO PROCURED AND IS DISTRIBUTING DREDGING MACHINES TO THOSE AREAS WHICH REQUIRE WATER CANALS TO BE CLEARED.

ADDITIONALLY, GOVERNMENT IS WORKING IN COLLABORATION WITH NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES TO DEVELOP WATER TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE ON SHARED WATERS SUCH AS MODERNISATION OF THE PORT OF MPULUNGU, THE ZAMBEZI-SHIRE WATERWAYS AND SHANGOMBO-RIVUNGU CANAL

MR. SPEAKER,

THE AVIATION SECTOR HAS POTENTIAL TO CONTRIBUTE TO TOURISM

DEVELOPMENT, INCREASED BUSINESS AND TRANSFORMATION OF ZAMBIA'S ECONOMY. IN THIS REGARD, GOVERNMENT HAS COMMENCED THE MODERNISATION AND UPGRADING OF AIRPORT INFRASTRUCTURE WHICH INCLUDE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORTS, PROVINCIAL AND SELECTED DISTRICT AERODROMES AT AN ESTIMATED COST OF 1.7 BILLION UNITED STATES DOLLARS.

GOVERNMENT HAS MADE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS IN ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL AIRLINE WHICH IS SCHEDULED TO START OPERATING IN 2016. THIS WILL GREATLY PROMOTE BUSINESS AND TOURISM. IN ADDITION, NEW EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES WILL BE CREATED FOR OUR YOUNG PEOPLE.

IN OUR QUEST TO BE COMPLIANT WITH THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANISATION STANDARDS, THE MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSPORT WILL BRING TO THIS HOUSE, THE CIVIL AVIATION BILL AIMED AT THE CONTROL, REGULATION AND ORDERLY DEVELOPMENT OF CIVIL AVIATION IN ZAMBIA. THE MINISTER WILL ALSO TABLE THE METEOROLOGICAL BILL TO PROVIDE FOR METEOROLOGICAL AND RELATED ADVISORY SERVICES.

TO ENSURE ADEQUATE SUPPLY OF HUMAN RESOURCE FOR OUR AVIATION INDUSTRY, I AM DIRECTING THE MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR

TRANSPORT TO COME UP WITH A REVITALIZATION PROGRAMME FOR THE ZAMBIA AIR SERVICES TRAINING INSTITUTE.

MR. SPEAKER,

ZAMBIA HAS JOINED THE DIGITAL GLOBAL VILLAGE AND HAS SUCCESSFULLY MIGRATED FROM ANALOGUE TO DIGITAL TERRESTRIAL TELEVISION TRANSMISSION. IN THIS REGARD, PHASE 1 OF THE DIGITAL MIGRATION HAS BEEN SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED AND THIS COVERS THE LINE OF RAIL. THIS HAS MADE ZAMBIA ONE OF THE FOUR COUNTRIES IN THE SOUTHERN AFRICA DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY (SADC) REGION

TO HAVE MET THE JUNE 17, 2015 INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS UNION DEADLINE. PHASE 2 AND 3 WILL COMMENCE BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR TO COVER THE REST OF THE COUNTRY. DIGITAL MIGRATION WILL PROVIDE A PLATFORM FOR ENSURING MAXIMUM FLOW OF INFORMATION ACROSS THE COUNTRY, CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNANCE ISSUES AND CREATION OF NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR EMPLOYMENT.

DIGITAL MIGRATION WILL REQUIRE A LOT OF LOCAL CONTENT IN OUR TELEVISION PROGRAMMING AND THIS WILL BE YET ANOTHER WINDOW FOR DEVELOPMENT OF TALENT AND JOB CREATION.

ZAMBIA WILL CONTINUE TO ENHANCE E-GOVERNMENT AS A CRITICAL

COMPONENT OF OUR TRANSFORMATIONAL CULTURE FOR A SMART ZAMBIA NOW. OUR PEOPLE ARE NOW ABLE TO ACCESS SOME GOVERNMENT SERVICES AND INFORMATION ON-LINE WITHOUT HAVING TO QUEUE UP OR WAIT FOR MONTHS TO BE SERVED. THE SERVICES INCLUDE APPLICATION FOR PASSPORTS AND TITLE DEEDS. IN ADDITION, IT PROVIDES FOR PAYMENT FOR SELECTED PUBLIC SERVICES, REGISTRATION OF COMPANIES AS WELL AS FILING OF ANNUAL RETURNS.

GOVERNMENT IS MAKING ANNUAL SAVINGS OF ABOUT 16.8 MILLION KWACHA ON THE COST FOR INTERNET SERVICES SINCE THE GOVERNMENT-WIDE AREA NETWORK WAS IMPLEMENTED IN 2014. FURTHERMORE, GOVERNMENT HAS IMPLEMENTED COST SAVING MEASURES WHICH INCLUDE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CIVIL SERVICE TRAVEL OFFICE, ABOLITION OF ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ALLOWANCES AND MOTOR VEHICLE SCHEME TO REPLACE PERSONAL TO HOLDER MOTOR VEHICLES.

ENERGY

MR. SPEAKER,

EARLIER, I ADDRESSED THE SHORT-TERM SOLUTIONS TO THE CURRENT POWER SHORTAGES BEING EXPERIENCED ACROSS THE COUNTRY. LET ME NOW TURN TO THE LONG-TERM SOLUTIONS WHICH ARE IN LINE WITH GOVERNMENT'S LONG-TERM GOALS.

GOVERNMENT HAS PARTNERED WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF THE

REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF DEVELOPING A 1,800 MEGAWATT POWER STATION AT BATOKA GORGE IN SOUTHERN PROVINCE BY 2019 AT AN ESTIMATED COST OF FOUR BILLION UNITED STATES DOLLARS.

IN ADDITION, GOVERNMENT IS WORKING WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO EXPAND POWER GENERATION AT THE KAFUE LOWER HYDRO POWER PLANT WHICH, UPON COMPLETION IN 2018, WILL GENERATE AN ADDITIONAL 750 MEGAWATTS OF ELECTRICITY.

THE INSTALLATION OF TWO GENERATORS AT THE KARIBA NORTH BANK IN 2013 AND 2014 WAS A STRATEGIC INVESTMENT WHICH INCREASED POWER GENERATION BY AN EXTRA 360 MEGAWATTS.

OTHER LONG-TERM MEASURES INCLUDE INCREASING POWER GENERATION AT CHISHIMBA AND MUSONDA FALLS FROM THE CURRENT SIX (6) TO 14.8 MEGAWATTS AND FROM FIVE (5) TO TEN (10) MEGAWATTS RESPECTIVELY.

GOVERNMENT IS ALSO UPGRADING THE LUSIWASI HYDRO POWER PROJECT IN SERENJE IN ORDER TO INCREASE ITS GENERATION CAPACITY FROM THE CURRENT TWELVE (12) TO 101 MEGAWATTS UPON COMPLETION.

GOVERNMENT WILL ALSO COMMISSION THE COAL-FIRED POWER

STATION AT MAAMBA COLLIERIES AND THE ITEZHI-TEZHI HYDRO POWER STATION. THE TWO PROJECTS WILL CONTRIBUTE AN EXTRA 420 MEGAWATTS TO THE NATIONAL POWER GRID BY JANUARY 2016.

IN LUAPULA PROVINCE, GOVERNMENT HAS ENGAGED THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO CONSTRUCT THE 150 MEGAWATTS KALUNGWISHI HYDRO POWER STATION.

MR. SPEAKER,

ALONGSIDE THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW HYDRO POWER STATIONS, GOVERNMENT IS ALSO REHABILITATING ITS OLD POWER STATIONS AND THIS HAS SEEN THE UP-RATING OF THE KAFUE GORGE POWER STATION FROM PRODUCING 900 TO 990 MEGAWATTS.

THE RE-INSTATING OF THE VICTORIA FALLS POWER STATION TO ITS FULL GENERATING CAPACITY OF 180 MEGAWATTS AND THE UP-RATING OF THE KARIBA NORTH BANK POWER STATION FROM 600 TO 720 MEGAWATTS ARE PART OF THE ROBUST GOVERNMENT INTERVENTIONS TO INCREASE ZAMBIA'S INSTALLED HYDROPOWER CAPACITY!

IN LINE WITH THE DIVERSIFICATION AGENDA, GOVERNMENT HAS BEGUN TO ACTIVELY PURSUE ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF ENERGY SUCH AS THERMAL, SOLAR, WIND AND BIO-MASS.

GOVERNMENT, THROUGH THE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, IS IMPLEMENTING A SOLAR-BASED RENEWABLE

ENERGY PROGRAMME TO REDRESS THE CURRENT POWER DEFICIT. THIS SOLAR PROJECT WILL ADD 600 MEGAWATTS TO THE NATIONAL POWER GRID. IN THE SAME VEIN, GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED TO PROMOTE THE USE OF NATURAL GAS AS AN ALTERNATIVE SOURCE OF ENERGY. TO THIS END, GOVERNMENT IS ENGAGING NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES ON THE POSSIBILITY OF ACCESSING NATURAL GAS FOR BOTH INDUSTRIAL AND DOMESTIC USE.

THIS IS IN ADDITION TO EXPLORATION OF NATURAL GAS WITHIN THE COUNTRY. I, THEREFORE, DIRECT THE MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR ENERGY TO QUICKLY MOVE TO FACILITATE THE EXPLORATION OF GAS BY THE PRIVATE SECTOR. THIS IS AN EMERGENCY THAT SHOULD BE TREATED WITH THE NECESSARY URGENCY. I WILL ACCEPT NO EXCUSES WHATSOEVER BY THOSE CHARGED WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY TO IMPLEMENT THIS DIRECTIVE. CABINET HAS IN RECENT WEEKS BEEN UNDERTAKING WIDE-RANGING INTERVENTIONS TO SPEED UP THE PROCUREMENT PROCESSES IN RESPECT OF NEW POWER INITIATIVES ESPECIALLY FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY.

I HAVE EXAMINED SEVERAL PROPOSALS THAT HAVE COME TO ME DIRECTLY, OTHERS THROUGH THE VICE-PRESIDENT AND THROUGH THE ENERGY MINISTRY AND I WISH TO SHARE MY FRUSTRATION THAT A NUMBER OF THESE INITIATIVES REMAIN UNATTENDED TO FOR MONTHS AND YEARS AT THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY AND OTHER RELEVANT INSTITUTIONS DEALING WITH ENERGY.

I THEREFORE WISH TO DIRECT FURTHER THAT ZESCO, WHICH HAS BEEN

MANDATED TO DEAL WITH THE PROCUREMENT OF ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF ENERGY, MUST MOVE EXPEDITIOUSLY TO CONCLUDE THESE PROCESSES. AS THIS MATTER IS A NATIONAL EMERGENCY, I DIRECT THE MINISTER OF ENERGY TO BRING TO CABINET ALL NECESSARY CABINET MEMORANDA TO ENSURE THAT THESE PROCUREMENT PROCESSES ARE COMPLETED NOT LATER THAN THREE WEEKS FROM NOW.

WE MUST ABANDON THE BUSINESS AS USUAL APPROACH TO MATTERS OF GRAVE NATIONAL IMPORTANCE. THOSE WHO ARE AFRAID TO VENTURE INTO NEW WAYS OF DOING THINGS MUST NOT HOLD THE SYSTEM HOSTAGE BY THEIR FEAR. I WANT ACTION AND TANGIBLE RESULTS OTHERWISE I PROMISE ACTION AGAINST THOSE DELAYING US FROM MOVING FORWARD.

I AM PLEASED TO INFORM THE HOUSE THAT A REFINED PETROLEUM MULTI-PRODUCT PIPELINE WORTH 2.5 BILLION UNITED STATES DOLLARS WILL BE BUILT FROM LOBITO BAY IN ANGOLA TO LUSAKA UNDER AN AMBITIOUS PRIVATE-SECTOR INITIATIVE WHICH MY ADMINISTRATION FULLY SUPPORTS!THE PIPELINE, WHOSE CONSTRUCTION WILL COMMENCE IN 2017, WILL DELIVER REFINED PETROLEUM PRODUCTS AS WELL AS GAS FOR POWER GENERATION FOR THE COUNTRY ESTIMATED AT 500 TO 1,000 MEGAWATTS.

THIS MASSIVE PROJECT WILL ALSO GENERATE JOBS. THIS PROJECT WILL MAKE ZAMBIAA DISTRIBUTION HUB FOR PETROLEUM PRODUCTS IN THE

SADC REGION.

THE MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR ENERGY WILL BRING TO THIS HOUSE THE ENERGY REGULATION BILL AIMED AT STRENGTHENING LEGAL PROVISIONS AND THE ELECTRICITY BILL AIMED AT PROMOTING PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENT IN ELECTRICITY GENERATION AND DISTRIBUTION.

THOSE WHO DOUBT OUR RESOLVE TO CONFRONT THE CHALLENGES THAT CONFRONT US MUST WATCH OUT AS I LEAD A CREDIBLE RESPONSE TO MAKE ZAMBIA TRANSITION FROM THE CURRENT ENERGY DEFICIT TO A NATION OF POWER SURPLUS IN JUST OVER A YEAR FROM NOW!

HOUSING

MR. SPEAKER,

GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO THE PROVISION OF AFFORDABLE AND QUALITY HOUSING FOR OUR CITIZENS BY FACILITATING INVESTMENT IN CEMENT PRODUCTION AND EMBARKING ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF AT LEAST 10,000 HOUSING UNITS ANNUALLY COUNTRYWIDE.

I AM, HOWEVER, CONCERNED BY THE INABILITY OF NATIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY TO BUILD AFFORDABLE HOUSES ACCORDING TO ITS MANDATE. I AM, THEREFORE, DIRECTING THE MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND HOUSING TO RESTRUCTURE AND REALIGN IT TO ITS ORIGINAL MANDATE.

HEALTH

MR. SPEAKER,

AS A DEMONSTRATION OF THE SUCCESS OF GOVERNMENT'S INVESTMENT IN HEALTH, THERE IS PROGRESS IN OVERALL INDICATORS OF THE HEALTH STATUS OF OUR PEOPLE. LATEST STATISTICS INDICATE THAT CHILD AND MATERNAL HEALTH INDICATORS HAVE IMPROVED SIGNIFICANTLY. MATERNAL MORTALITY RATIO HAS DECLINED FROM 591 DEATHS PER 100,000 LIVE BIRTHS IN 2007 TO 398 DEATHS PER 100,000 LIVE BIRTHS IN 2014.

SIMILARLY, THE UNDER-FIVE MORTALITY RATE HAS DECLINED FROM 119 PER 1,000 LIVE BIRTHS IN 2007 TO 75 PER 1,000 LIVE BIRTHS IN 2014. INFANT MORTALITY RATE HAS DECLINED FROM 70 TO 45 PER 1,000 LIVE BIRTHS OVER THE SAME PERIOD. SIMILARLY, NEONATAL MORTALITY RATE HAS DECLINED FROM 37 PER 1,000 LIVE BIRTHS TO 24 OVER THE SAME PERIOD. THESE INDICATORS DEMONSTRATE THAT WE ARE MOVING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.

MR. SPEAKER,

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE CANCER DISEASES HOSPITAL IN LUSAKA HAS BEEN COMPLETED. THIS WILL NOT ONLY CATER FOR TREATMENT OF LOCAL CANCER PATIENTS BUT WILL ALSO PROMOTE MEDICAL TOURISM FROM THE REGION AND BEYOND.

GOVERNMENT HAS TRANSFORMED LIVINGSTONE GENERAL HOSPITAL TO CENTRAL HOSPITAL STATUS WHICH WILL ALSO BE A TEACHING

HOSPITAL. IN ADDITION, MODERN SPECIALISED MEDICAL EQUIPMENT HAS BEEN INSTALLED AT MANSA, KASAMA, CHIPATA, LEWANIKA, SOLWEZI AND KABWE GENERAL HOSPITALS. FURTHERMORE, GOVERNMENT IS EXPANDING LEVY MWANAWASA GENERAL HOSPITAL BY AN ADDITIONAL 800 BED CAPACITY FACILITY WHICH IS EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED IN 2018.

GOVERNMENT HAS COMMENCED CONSTRUCTION OF EIGHT NEW DISTRICT HOSPITALS. THESE INCLUDE VUBWI, IKELENG'E, MUFULIRA, MAFINGA, MANSA, NALOLO, LIMULUNGA AND CHILUBI ISLAND.

THIS BRINGS THE TOTAL NUMBER OF DISTRICT HOSPITALS UNDER CONSTRUCTION ACROSS THE COUNTRY TO THIRTY-EIGHT. GOVERNMENT IS ALSO CONSTRUCTING STAFF HOUSES.

I AM HAPPY TO REPORT THAT THE WORK ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE 3,000 STUDENT CAPACITY FACILITY IN LUSAKA AT LEVY MWANAWASA HOSPITAL COMMENCED IN MARCH THIS YEAR. ADDITIONALLY, THE CONSTRUCTION AND REHABILITATION PROGRAMME HAS BEEN EXTENDED TO OTHER HEALTH TRAINING SCHOOLS ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

MR. SPEAKER,

AS A COUNTRY, WE HAVE NOT PAID ADEQUATE ATTENTION TO THE CHALLENGE OF MENTAL HEALTH. ACCORDINGLY, THE MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR HEALTH WILL BRING TO THIS HOUSE THE MENTAL

HEALTH BILL AIMED AT PROMOTING AND PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH MENTAL DISORDERS AS WELL AS REPEALING THE **1949 MENTAL DISORDERS ACT**. THE MINISTER WILL ALSO TABLE THE FOOD QUALITY AND SAFETY BILL AIMED AT PROTECTING THE PUBLIC AGAINST FOOD-RELATED HEALTH HAZARDS AND FRAUD IN THE SALE AND USE OF FOOD AS WELL AS REGISTRATION AND REGULATION OF FOOD OUTLETS.

EDUCATION

MR. SPEAKER,

EDUCATION IS IMPORTANT TO DEVELOPING A SKILLED WORK FORCE REQUIRED FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. THE GOVERNMENT CONTINUES TO INVEST IN UNIVERSAL AND QUALITY EDUCATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE.

IN 2014, A TOTAL OF 1,526 EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CENTRES WERE OPERATIONALISED COUNTRYWIDE, WITH AN INITIAL ENROLMENT OF 70,000 LEARNERS. THESE CENTRES WERE CONSTRUCTED MAINLY IN THE RURAL AND REMOTE AREAS WHERE, PREVIOUSLY, THERE WERE VIRTUALLY NO SUCH FACILITIES.

MR. SPEAKER,

GOVERNMENT IS EXPANDING THE SECONDARY SCHOOL SUB-SECTOR BY CONSTRUCTING NEW BOARDING AND DAY SCHOOLS COUNTRYWIDE. GOVERNMENT IS ALSO UPGRADING 220 BASIC SCHOOLS INTO SECONDARY SCHOOLS. THIS WILL RESULT IN THE CREATION OF OVER 100,000 SPACES FOR LEARNERS.

GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE WITH ITS PROGRAMME OF ENSURING THAT EVERY PROVINCE HAS AT-LEAST ONE UNIVERSITY. SO FAR, THE CONSTRUCTION WORKS AT LUBWA, CHALIMBANA AND PALABANA UNIVERSITIES ARE PROGRESSING WELL. CONSTRUCTION OF ROBERT MAKASA UNIVERSITY IN MUCHINGA PROVINCE HAS BEEN COMPLETED AND THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION IS ACTIVELY WORKING ON ITS OPERATIONALISATION.

GOVERNMENT WILL, BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR, COMMENCE CONSTRUCTION OF KING LEWANIKA UNIVERSITY IN MONGU AND LUAPULA UNIVERSITY IN MANSA.

HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

MR. SPEAKER,

HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH EDUCATION AND SKILLS TRAINING IS INSTRUMENTAL FOR THE TRANSFORMATION OF ANY COUNTRY. THIS IS PARTICULARLY SO NOW, GIVEN THE GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS, RAPID ADVANCEMENTS IN TECHNOLOGY AND SUSTAINED DEMANDS FOR HIGH PRODUCTIVITY AND PERFORMANCE. IT IS IN THIS REGARD THAT GOVERNMENT HAS RE-PRIORITISED EDUCATION, SKILLS DEVELOPMENT, AS WELL AS SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION.

GOVERNMENT IS REVIEWING THE POLICIES ON EDUCATION, SCIENCE

AND TECHNOLOGY AS WELL AS THE TECHNICAL EDUCATION, VOCATIONAL AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP TRAINING IN ORDER TO MAKE THEM MORE RELEVANT TO THE CURRENT AND FUTURE NEEDS OF OUR COUNTRY. THE MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR EDUCATION MUST ENSURE THAT THIS PROCESS IS CONCLUDED BY JUNE 2016.

MR. SPEAKER,

MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE LIE AT THE CORE OF INNOVATION, OUR FUTURE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE AND PROGRESS. IN RECOGNITION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE, GOVERNMENT IS TRAINING 2,700 TEACHERS WHO ARE UNDERGOING FAST-TRACK CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCES AT VARIOUS UNIVERSITIES. THIS WILL HELP REDUCE THE ACUTE SHORTAGE OF SUITABLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS OF MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE IN OUR SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

THIS INVESTMENT IN TRAINING MUST GO HAND IN HAND WITH A DELIBERATE POLICY TO EQUIP ALL OUR SCHOOLS WITH INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY FACILITIES. OUR CHILDREN MUST BE COMPUTER LITERATE.

MR. SPEAKER,

FURTHER, TO DEEPEN OUR CHILDREN'S INTEREST IN MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE, I AM DIRECTING THE MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR EDUCATION TO REVAMP AND STRENGTHEN THE JUNIOR ENGINEERS, TECHNICIANS, AND SCIENTISTS (POPULARY KNOWN AS JETS CLUBS) IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

THIS SHOULD BE FOLLOWED BY AN EFFECTIVE TRACKING SYSTEM OF THESE BUDDING SCIENTISTS AS THEY PROGRESS IN THEIR EDUCATION AND STRONG CAREER GUIDANCE PROGRAMME. A DELIBERATE EFFORT MUST ALSO BE MADE TO AWARD SCHOLARSHIPS TO DESERVING STUDENTS WITH A STRONG LEANING IN MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE.

MR. SPEAKER,

I HAVE APPROVED AN INITIATIVE FOR TRANSFORMING THE EDUCATION SECTOR THROUGH E-LEARNING BY USING AN INNOVATIVE EDUCATION TABLET CALLED THE ZEduPad DEVELOPED BY THE LATE MR. MARK BENNETT IN CONSULTATION WITH THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION. THE ZEduPad TABLET IS PRE-LOADED WITH LESSONS, LEARNING MATERIALS AND EXTENSION AGRICULTURE AND HEALTH INFORMATION. I EXPECT THAT BY 2017, 50% OF OUR CHILDREN IN SCHOOL WILL HAVE ACCESS TO THE ZEduPad AND PUT US ON A PATH OF SMART EDUCATION. I, THEREFORE, CALL UPON THE MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR EDUCATION AND INDUSTRY IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION TO INITIATE A PROGRAMME OF LOCALLY MANUFACTURING AFFORDABLE TABLETS.

MR. SPEAKER,

OUR RENEWED INTEREST IN MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE ALSO CALLS FOR A REVIEW AND RESUSCITATION OF THE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL

TECHNOLOGY BUSINESS CENTRE IN NURTURING AND COMMERCIALISING LOCAL INNOVATIONS AND INVENTIONS.

THE PATENTS AND COMPANY REGISTRATION AGENCY SHOULD ALSO TAKE A LEAD IN BUILDING LINKAGES WITH OUR LEARNING, RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CENTRES TO MAKE SURE THAT ALL LOCAL INVENTIONS AND INNOVATIONS ARE DULY PATENTED. IN ADDITION, THE ZAMBIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MUST TAKE KEEN INTEREST IN LINKING THE ZAMBIAN POOL OF INVENTORS AND INNOVATORS WITH BOTH LOCAL AND FOREIGN INVESTORS AND BUSINESS PEOPLE.

MR. SPEAKER,

GOVERNMENT ALSO REMAINS COMMITTED TO EMPOWERING THE ZAMBIAN PEOPLE WITH LIFELONG AND SURVIVAL SKILLS BY CONSTRUCTING AT-LEAST ONE TRADES TRAINING INSTITUTE IN EACH DISTRICT.

OVER THE YEARS, MOST OF OUR TRADES TRAINING INSTITUTES HAVE ABANDONED THEIR ORIGINAL MANDATES AND FOCUSED ON BUSINESS COURSES. THIS HAS DEPRIVED THE COUNTRY OF CRITICAL ARTISANAL SKILLS REQUIRED TO DRIVE INDUSTRY.

THIS HAS ALSO CONTRIBUTED TO THE HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN THE COUNTRY. I AM, THEREFORE, DIRECTING THE MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR VOCATIONAL TRAINING TO ENSURE THAT THE

TRADES TRAINING INSTITUTES REVERT TO THEIR ORIGINAL MANDATES.

I AM ALSO DIRECTING THE MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR INDUSTRY AND LABOUR TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT AN APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME TO ENABLE OUR YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN ACQUIRE VITAL SKILLS ON THE JOB.

IN THE SAME VEIN, I AM CALLING UPON THE MINISTERS TO CLOSELY INVOLVE THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CURRICULA SO THAT THEY MEET THE NEEDS OF INDUSTRY.

DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

MR. SPEAKER,

GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO DELIVERING A PEOPLE-DRIVEN CONSTITUTION IS UNWAVERING. TO THIS END, THE FINAL DRAFT CONSTITUTION WAS RELEASED TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC IN OCTOBER LAST YEAR TO ENABLE THEM STUDY IT AND MAKE COMMENTS.

AS A FOLLOW-UP, GOVERNMENT HAS PUBLISHED THE CONSTITUTION (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2015 CONTAINING NON-CONTENTIOUS CLAUSES AND IS SCHEDULED FOR PRESENTATION TO THE HOUSE DURING THIS SITTING.

I URGE ALL ZAMBIANS TO TAKE KEEN INTEREST IN THIS BILL AND ENGAGE THEIR MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT TO ENSURE THAT THEIR

VIEWS ARE WELL REPRESENTED AND TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT WHEN THE BILL IS DEBATED.

MR. SPEAKER,

THE DECISION TO PRESENT THE NON-CONTENTIOUS CLAUSES FOR ENACTMENT BY PARLIAMENT IS INFORMED BY THE REAL DANGER OF LOSING EVEN THE PROGRESSIVE AND NON-CONTENTIOUS PROVISIONS OF THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION IF THE ENTIRE DOCUMENT WAS SUBJECTED TO A REFERENDUM.

TO DEMONSTRATE GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO DELIVERING A PEOPLE-DRIVEN CONSTITUTION, THE REFERENDUM ACT HAS BEEN AMENDED IN ANTICIPATION OF THE REFERENDUM TO BE HELD

ALONGSIDE THE 2016 GENERAL ELECTIONS. THIS AMENDMENT, EXPRESSLY MANDATES THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION OF ZAMBIA TO BE THE REFERENDUM COMMISSION AND INSTITUTIONALISES THE CONDUCT OF REFERENDA.

FURTHER, IT IS NECESSARY TO HOLD THE REFERENDUM ALONGSIDE NEXT YEAR'S GENERAL ELECTIONS AS A WAY OF ENHANCING THE CHANCES OF THE REFERENDUM BEING SUCCESSFUL AND TO ENSURE A COST-EFFECTIVE PROCESS.

MR. SPEAKER,

GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION. TO THIS END, DESPITE ZAMBIA MAKING HEADWAY IN REDUCING LEVELS OF CORRUPTION, I WOULD LIKE TO RE-AFFIRM GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO ZERO TOLERANCE TO CORRUPTION.

I WILL NOT PROTECT ANY ONE SERVING IN PUBLIC OFFICE FOUND WANTING IN OUR ANTI-CORRUPTION DRIVE. GOVERNMENT ALSO REMAINS COMMITTED TO ENSURING THAT IT FULFILS ITS OBLIGATIONS OF PROTECTING, RESPECTING AND FULFILLING HUMAN RIGHTS. I WOULD LIKE TO RE-AFFIRM GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO PRESERVE THE FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND ASSOCIATION.

TO THIS END, I AM DIRECTING THE MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS TO CONSULT WIDELY AND PREPARE AND PRESENT A BILL TO THIS AUGUST HOUSE TO AMEND THE PUBLIC ORDER ACT. I AM FURTHER DIRECTING THE MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR JUSTICE AFTER CONSULTATION WITH POLITICAL PARTIES THROUGH THE ZAMBIA CENTRE FOR INTER-PARTY DIALOGUE TO PREPARE AND PRESENT A BILL TO THIS AUGUST HOUSE TO REGULATE AND PROTECT THE RIGHT OF POLITICAL PARTIES TO FREELY ASSOCIATE. I AM ALSO DIRECTING THE MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR INFORMATION AND JUSTICE TO CONSULT AS WIDELY AS POSSIBLE ON THE POSSIBLE AMENDMENTS TO REMOVE ARCHAIC PROVISIONS THAT IMPEDE ON MEDIA FREEDOMS.

LET ME ASSURE THE HOUSE THAT GOVERNMENT ALSO REMAINS COMMITTED TO MEETING MINIMUM STANDARDS OF THE UNITED NATIONS FOR THE TREATMENT AND CARE OF PRISONERS.

GENDER AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

MR. SPEAKER,

GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO PROTECTING THE MARGINALISED IN SOCIETY, ESPECIALLY WOMEN, CHILDREN AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES. TO THIS END, GOVERNMENT IS IMPLEMENTING THE FOLLOWING SOCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAMMES: THE SOCIAL CASH TRANSFER SCHEME, FOOD SECURITY PACK, WOMEN AND YOUTH EMPOWERMENT TO MENTION BUT A FEW.

TO DEMONSTRATE THIS COMMITMENT, THE SOCIAL CASH TRANSFER PROGRAMME HAS INCREASED THE NUMBER OF BENEFICIARY HOUSEHOLDS FROM 145,000 IN 2014 TO 191,500 THIS YEAR, OF WHICH ABOUT 19,000 ARE PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES. THIS SIGNIFIES THE INCLUSIVE NATURE OF THE SOCIAL CASH TRANSFER PROGRAMME.

MR. SPEAKER,

GOVERNMENT IS CURRENTLY DEVELOPING THE SINGLE REGISTRY OF BENEFICIARIES OF SOCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAMMES TO ENHANCE TARGETING AND TRANSPARENCY. I AM, THEREFORE, DIRECTING THE MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND HOME AFFAIRS TO SPEED UP THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF

THE SINGLE REGISTRY. THE REGISTRY WILL ENABLE THE GOVERNMENT TO MONITOR AND EVALUATE BENEFICIARIES WITH A VIEW OF PROMOTING GRADUATION.

GOVERNMENT HAS EMBARKED ON REFORMING THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM AIMED AT ESTABLISHING A COMPREHENSIVE AND RESPONSIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEM TO ADDRESS, AMONG OTHERS, THE PLIGHT OF THE RETIREES. GOVERNMENT IS ALSO DEVELOPING A NATIONAL SOCIAL HEALTH INSURANCE SCHEME TO ENABLE ALL CITIZENS ACCESS QUALITY HEALTH SERVICES TIMELY AND WITHOUT FINANCIAL HARDSHIP.

I AM DIRECTING THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE TO PRIORITISE AND EXPEDITE THE FINALISATION OF THE SOCIAL PROTECTION BILL. THE MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR GENDER WILL BRING TO THIS HOUSE THE CHILDREN'S CODE BILL AIMED AT ALIGNING THE IDEALS OF ALL CHILDREN'S RIGHTS WITH OUR DOMESTIC LAWS.

MR. SPEAKER,

THE FORMER PRESIDENTS BENEFITS ACT DOES NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE ISSUE OF LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY. I AM, THEREFORE, DIRECTING THE MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR JUSTICE AND FINANCE TO REVIEW **THE FORMER PRESIDENTS BENEFITS ACT** TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT OUR ABILITY TO PAY AS A NATION AND INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICES.

DIPLOMACY, GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS AND NATIONAL DEFENCE

MR. SPEAKER,

RAPID SOCIO-ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION OF OUR COUNTRY WILL DEPEND ON ACCESS TO FOREIGN MARKETS, TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY AND ATTRACTION OF FOREIGN INVESTMENT AS WELL AS PROMOTION OF TOURISM.

ZAMBIAN MISSIONS ABROAD PLAY A CRITICAL ROLE IN FACILITATING THESE PURSUITS. IN THIS REGARD, GOVERNMENT IS PROMOTING ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY AS THE KEY LEVER OF OUR FOREIGN POLICY.

TO IMPLEMENT ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY, GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO DEVELOPING A PROFESSIONAL FOREIGN SERVICE MANNED BY OFFICERS WITH THE NECESSARY EXPERTISE AND STRONG SENSE OF PATRIOTISM. I AM, ACCORDINGLY, DIRECTING THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO BRING TO THIS HOUSE A BILL CREATING A CAREER FOREIGN SERVICE.

MR. SPEAKER,

THE NEED FOR STRONG GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS CANNOT BE OVER-EMPHASISED. GOVERNMENT WILL, IN THIS CONNECTION, CONTINUE TO PROMOTE BILATERAL AND MULTI-LATERAL ENGAGEMENTS.

GOVERNMENT VALUES THE SUPPORT OF OUR BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL PARTNERS WHO CONTINUE TO PROVIDE FINANCE AND

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE. WE LOOK FORWARD TO THE CONTINUED WARM RELATIONS WITH ALL OUR CO-OPERATING PARTNERS.

GOVERNMENT FURTHER RECOGNISES THE IMPORTANCE OF CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR THOSE OF OUR PEOPLE THAT ARE IN THE DIASPORA IN ORDER FOR THEM TO CONTRIBUTE EFFECTIVELY TO OUR DEVELOPMENT AGENDA. IN RECOGNITION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS CONSTITUENCY, GOVERNMENT IS DEVELOPING A DIASPORA POLICY, WHICH WILL ENHANCE THE PARTICIPATION OF ZAMBIANS LIVING ABROAD IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR COUNTRY.

MR. SPEAKER,

ZAMBIA IS COMMITTED TO PROMOTING PEACE AND SECURITY AT HOME AND ABROAD. I AM GLAD THAT OUR DEFENCE FORCES CONTINUE TO PLAY A PIVOTAL ROLE IN NATIONAL DEFENCE AS WELL AS PEACE-KEEPING MISSIONS AROUND THE WORLD.

GOVERNMENT IS MODERNISING OUR DEFENCE FORCES TO BECOME MORE RELEVANT TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT. RECENTLY, I LAUNCHED THE 48 MARINE UNIT IN KAWAMBWA TO BOLSTER OUR DEFENCE CAPABILITIES.

CULTURE RE-MODELLING

MR. SPEAKER,

TO IMPLEMENT OUR TRANSFORMATION AGENDA, WE NEED TO CHANGE THE WAY WE THINK, BEHAVE AND DO THINGS. THERE IS NEED FOR STRONG DETERMINATION, INTEGRITY AND RESPECT FOR THE TENETS OF GOOD GOVERNANCE ACROSS GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTOR INSTITUTIONS.

THIS IS CRITICAL IF WE ARE GOING TO IMPROVE OUR INDIVIDUAL AND NATIONAL PRODUCTIVITY LEVELS TO TRANSFORM INTO A PROSPEROUS NATION IN THE NEXT FIFTY YEARS. ACCORDINGLY, I AM DIRECTING THE SECRETARY TO THE CABINET TO ENSURE THAT THIS CHANGE IS INSTITUTIONALISED IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE.

MR. SPEAKER,

IN THE SAME VEIN I AM CALLING UPON ALL LEADERS, LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC TO JOIN THIS JOURNEY OF NATIONAL TRANSFORMATION. IN THIS REGARD, THERE IS NEED TO STRIVE TOWARDS LIVING AND WORKING IN A CLEAN ENVIRONMENT.

TO THIS EFFECT, I AM DIRECTING THE MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND ENVIRONMENT TO WORK WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS TO RESUSCITATE THE KEEP ZAMBIA CLEAN CAMPAIGN AND IMPLEMENT A NAME AND SHAME CAMPAIGN FOR THE DIRTIEST TOWNS IN OUR COUNTRY. WE SHOULD ALSO RECOGNISE THE CLEANEST TOWNS. OUR DESIRE IS TO HAVE A SITUATION WHERE SOME OF OUR TOWNS AND CITIES JOIN THE LEAGUE OF SMART CITIES OF THE WORLD WITHIN THE NEXT FIVE TO TEN YEARS.

PARLIAMENTARY BUSINESS

MR. SPEAKER,

AS WE EMBARK ON OUR TRANSFORMATION PROCESS TO CREATE A SMART ZAMBIA, GOVERNMENT WILL COME UP WITH SEVERAL POLICY REFORM INITIATIVES WHICH WILL TRANSLATE INTO LEGISLATION.

GOVERNMENT IS ALSO COMMITTED TO FACILITATING THE SMOOTH FLOW OF THE BUSINESS OF THIS HOUSE. IN THIS CONNECTION, I WOULD LIKE TO UNDER-SCORE MY COMMITMENT TO SEE TO IT THAT ALL MINISTERS SUBMIT ON TIME FULLY RESEARCHED ANNUAL REPORTS AS WELL AS RESPONSES TO GOVERNMENT ASSURANCES. FURTHER, MINISTERS SHOULD PROVIDE ANSWERS ON TIME AND IN FULL TO ALL QUESTIONS ARISING FROM THIS HOUSE INCLUDING THOSE FROM PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES.

MR. SPEAKER,

THE FIRM COMMITMENTS THAT I HAVE MADE TO THIS HOUSE SHOULD SIGNAL TO THE PUBLIC SERVICE, MY DESIRE TO SEE ITS TRANSFORMATION INTO A HIGH PERFORMANCE SERVICE THAT SHOULD ENABLE ME FULFIL MY COMMITMENTS TO THIS HOUSE AND THE ZAMBIAN PEOPLE.

I WILL, IN THIS RESPECT, NOT TOLERATE ANY COMPLACENCY BY ANY MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE. I AM ACCORDINGLY DIRECTING THE SECRETARY TO THE CABINET TO COME UP WITH A BILL THAT WILL

REGULATE PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYMENT, INCLUDING A PERFORMANCE BASED MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.

I AM HUMBLLED TO BE DOING THIS JOB BECAUSE AS YOUR ELECTED PRESIDENT, YOU EFFECTIVELY MADE ME IN CHARGE OF ENSURING THAT:

- YOUR HOSPITALS HAVE ENOUGH DRUGS AND BEDS SO THAT OUR BABIES AND THEIR MOTHERS DO NOT DIE NEEDLESSLY
- THE MAIZE PRODUCED BY OUR FARMERS DOES NOT GO TO WASTE
- THAT THE FARMERS HAVE IN-PUTS DELIVERED TO THEM AT A GOOD PRICE AND A GOOD TIME
- THAT THE ROADS LEADING TO THE POINTS OF PRODUCTION AND POINTS OF CONSUMPTION ARE PROPERLY MAINTAINED
- THAT LAW AND ORDER IS OBSERVED SO THAT THERE IS NO ANARCHY IN THE COUNTRY
- THAT WE HAVE NO SHORTAGES OF ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES SUCH AS DIESEL, PETROL AND DEFICITS IN ELECTRICITY SUPPLY TO MENTION BUT A FEW

CONCLUSION

MR. SPEAKER,

I IMPLORE THIS HOUSE AND THE NATION AT LARGE TO EMBARK ON A NEW JOURNEY OF CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION FOR A SMART ZAMBIA IN ORDER TO CONSOLIDATE OUR INDEPENDENCE AND ACCELERATE SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROGRESS.

IN PURSUIT OF THE VIRTUES OF EQUITY AND OUR ASPIRATIONS FOR A SMART ZAMBIA, I WISH TO ANNOUNCE CHANGES TO THE LAW THAT

PROVIDES FOR BENEFITS FOR RETIRED PRESIDENTS. I DO NOT THINK THAT IT IS FAIR AND EQUITABLE THAT THE STATE MUST BUILD A HOUSE FOR A RETIRED PRESIDENT AND NOT FOR OTHERS.

WE HAVE TO DEMONSTRATE STRONG COMMITMENT TO COST-SAVING MEASURES FOR NOW AND FOR THE FUTURE. I AM PROPOSING THAT THIS FORFEITURE TAKES EFFECT STARTING WITH ME.

THE NEED FOR REFORM OF PENSION PACKAGES FOR ALL CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICE HOLDERS IS A MATTER WE MUST COLLECTIVELY INTERROGATE BECAUSE THESE PENSIONS WERE FIT FOR PURPOSE AT THE TIME WHEN THEY WERE PASSED BUT NOT ANY LONGER.

LET US THEREFORE INTERROGATE THESE LAWS WITH AN OPEN MIND WITH A VIEW TO STREAMLINING THEM IN LINE WITH THE REALITIES OF TODAY.

AS I CONCLUDE, I WOULD LIKE TO ONCE AGAIN CALL ON ALL ZAMBIANS AT HOME AND IN THE DIASPORA TO FOCUS AND ALIGN OUR ENERGIES WITH A SENSE OF COMMON PURPOSE, URGENCY AND RESILIENCE TO FULFIL OUR NATIONAL ASPIRATION TO BE A DEVELOPED COUNTRY BY 2064.

FOR THOSE OF US IN THE POLITICAL ARENA, **MR SPEAKER**, MY APPEAL IS THAT LET US CONDUCT ISSUE-BASED POLITICS. LET US REJECT

POLITICS OF CHARACTER ASSASSINATION AND THE CULTURE OF INSULTS, TRIBALISM AND REGIONALISM WHICH HAVE CREEPED INTO OUR POLITICS.

THESE VICES ARE UNCHRISTIAN AND VERY UN-ZAMBIAN! LET US PUT A STOP TO THIS AND CONCERN OURSELVES WITH REAL ISSUES THAT AFFECT THE GREATER MAJORITY OF OUR PEOPLE. WE HAVE A DUTY TO RAPIDLY TRANSFORM ZAMBIA INTO A THRIVING SOCIETY THAT ASSURES ALL ITS CITIZENS OF EXPANDING BUSINESS, EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES.

THIS WILL IN TURN DELIVER RISING PRODUCTIVITY, INCOMES, GREATER PROSPERITY, INCLUSIVENESS AND NATIONAL COHESION.

LIKE OUR FORE-FATHERS, WHO PIONEERED THE STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE AND SELF-DETERMINATION, LET US BE PIONEERS IN RAPID AND INCLUSIVE SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION FOR A SMART ZAMBIA. THIS IS THE HISTORIC MISSION OF OUR GENERATION.

A FAIR, JUST AND HUMANE SOCIETY IS POSSIBLE. WE ARE AN ASPIRATION NATION THAT HAS RISEN ABOVE MAJOR CHALLENGES IN THE PAST. WE HAVE TO WORK TOWARDS BUILDING A FAIR SOCIETY UNITED IN PEACFUL COMMERCE, A ZAMBIA WHICH WILL OFFER A RENDEVOUS OF OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL. WE MUST ALL ASPIRE FOR A ZAMBIA THAT SPEAKS TO THE INTEREST OF ALL ZAMBIANS. LET US PUT ZAMBIA FIRST AND SELF SECOND.

MR. SPEAKER,

AT THE STROKE OF MIDNIGHT ON 24TH OCTOBER, 2064, ZAMBIA SHOULD AWAKEN TO ONE UNDENIABLE TRUTH AND REALITY: THAT OURS WAS A GENERATION OF ACHIEVERS, A GENERATION OF MEN AND WOMEN WHO, PROPELLED BY THE ENERGY OF PATRIOTISM AND CHANGED THIS COUNTRY FOREVER.

CO-EXISTENCE IS THE KEY WORD HERE AND THE SPIRIT OF OUR FOUNDING FATHER OF THE NATION DR KENNETH KAUNDA WHO ENCOURAGED US TO ALWAYS LIVE BY THE MOTTO OF: **“ONE ZAMBIA AND ONE NATION.”**

LET US CONCENTRATE, FELLOW COUNTRYMEN, AND WOMEN ON THAT WHICH UNITES US NOT THAT WHICH DIVIDES US. WE INHERITED THIS BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY FOR OUR CHILDREN AND NOT FOR OURSELVES. LET US WORK TOGETHER TO MAKE IT BETTER FOR THEM. LET US HEAL ITS DEFECTS AND MAKE IT A BETTER PLACE.

HATE, BITTERNESS, CONTEMPT AND ENVY ARE EVIL VICES THAT HAVE NO PLACE IN A SOCIETY LIKE OURS. WE ARE ABOVE THAT. WE ARE A CHRISTIAN NATION. LET ME TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO ANNOUNCE THAT I HAVE PROCLAIMED 18TH OCTOBER 2015 AS A DAY OF NATIONAL PRAYER, AND FASTING FOR RECONCILIATION, FORGIVENESS AND GENERALLY TO ENCOURAGE THE NATION TO SEEK THE FACE OF GOD. THE PROCLAMATION ORDER WILL BE PUBLISHED LATER TODAY.

MR. SPEAKER

I HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO DOUBT THE LIVING GOD WHO GUIDED OUR FOREFATHERS WILL GUIDE US IN OUR CURRENT ENDEAVOURS. WE ARE AN ASPIRATION NATION! WE ARE A NATION OF FAITH. WE ARE A CHRISTIAN NATION!

IT IS NOW MY HONOUR AND PRIVILEGE, MR SPEAKER, TO DECLARE OPEN, THE FIFTH SESSION OF THE ELEVENTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.

MAY GOD BLESS OUR GREAT NATION, ZAMBIA.

I THANK YOU.