

**STATEMENT TO BE DELIVERED
BY
MR. HAKAINDE HICHILEMA
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA
DURING THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE 77TH SESSION OF
THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
ON 21ST SEPTEMBER 2022**

STATE HOUSE
LUSAKA

SEPTEMBER, 2022

- **YOUR EXCELLENCY, AMBASSADOR CSABA KÖRÖSI, PRESIDENT OF THE 77TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY;**
- **YOUR EXCELLENCY MR. ANTÓNIO GUTERRES, SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS;**
- **YOUR EXCELLENCIES HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT;**
- **DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.**

WE CONGRATULATE YOU, MR. PRESIDENT, ON YOUR ELECTION AS THE PRESIDENT OF THE 77TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

WITH YOUR VAST EXPERIENCE, WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT YOU WILL SUCCESSFULLY PROVIDE THE REQUIRED LEADERSHIP DURING YOUR TENURE AS PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

WE PAY TRIBUTE TO HIS EXCELLENCY MR. ABDULLA SHAHID FOR HIS UNWAVERING DEDICATION AND GOOD STEWARDSHIP DURING THE 76TH SESSION.

MR. PRESIDENT, EXCELLENCIES,

WE MEET HERE AT A DIFFICULT TIME.

A TIME WHEN GLOBAL CHALLENGES HAVE NOT ONLY MULTIPLIED, BUT HAVE BECOME MORE COMPLEX. SUCH CHALLENGES INCLUDE:

- **THE COVID-19 CRISIS,**
- **CLIMATE CHANGE,**
- **UKRAINE WAR AND ASSOCIATED EFFECTS ON SUPPLY CHAINS,**
- **FOOD INSECURITY,**
- **HIGH COMMODITY AND ENERGY PRICES,**
- **AS WELL AS THE OVERALL HIGH COST OF LIVING....**

CAST A DARK SHADOW OVER THE ATTAINMENT OF THE SDGS.

THE RISK OF REVERSAL IN HARD-WON DEVELOPMENTAL GAINS IS EVER SO REAL.

COVID-19 UNMASKED THE GLOBAL INEQUALITIES, WHICH STRETCH WELL BEYOND INCOME AND POLITICAL BOUNDARIES, AS EVIDENCED THROUGH VARIED ACCESS TO VACCINES.

THE RISK OF FURTHER INEQUALITY IS ALSO REAL, ESPECIALLY FOR US DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, WHICH HAVE INADEQUATE CAPACITY TO ADAPT AND MITIGATE THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE, DESPITE OUR INSIGNIFICANT CARBON FOOTPRINT.

THIS IS TRULY A DEFINING MOMENT OF OUR TIME, WHERE COLLECTIVE EFFORTS MUST BE CHANNELLED TO ADDRESS THE NUMEROUS CHALLENGES, WE FACE.

MR. PRESIDENT,

THAT IS WHY ZAMBIA WELCOMES THE CHALLENGE ON BUILDING "OUR COMMON AGENDA" AND ENDORSE THE CALL TO CONVENE THE "SUMMIT OF THE FUTURE".

WE CALL FOR THE ATTAINMENT OF A "PACT FOR THE FUTURE" THAT UNDERWRITES A NEW FORM OF MULTILATERALISM.

ONE WHERE MAJOR CHALLENGES ARE FACED TOGETHER, IN SOLIDARITY, WITHIN A CONTEXT OF A REVITALIZED INTERNATIONAL ORDER THAT IS RULES-BASED, FAIR AND INCLUSIVE, WITH THE UNITED NATIONS AT THE CENTRE OF IT.

AS A COUNTRY WITH TWO-THIRDS OF THE POPULATION BELOW THE AGE OF 25, THE OUTLOOK ON THE FUTURE AND EMPHASIS ON INTERGENERATIONAL EQUITY IS VERY IMPORTANT TO US.

OUR GOVERNMENT SEEKS TO HARNESS THIS DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND BY INVESTING IN ITS YOUTHFUL AND ENERGETIC POPULATION FOR A BETTER FUTURE.

WE, THEREFORE, SUPPORT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE UN YOUTH OFFICE.

THIS SHOULD ENCOURAGE MEANINGFUL YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN DIVERSE WAYS, SUCH AS IN POLITICAL REPRESENTATION, ACCESS TO LIFELONG SKILLS TRAINING AND EDUCATION, SUPPORT TO YOUTH INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INDEED IN DECISION-MAKING IN MANY AREAS INCLUDING CLIMATE-CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.

MR. PRESIDENT,

IN SPITE OF THE STEADY PROGRESS MADE TOWARDS CURBING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, WE STILL NEED TO REMAIN VIGILANT TO GUARD AGAINST THE POSSIBILITY OF ITS RESURGENCE.

WE HAVE ALL EXPERIENCED THE NEGATIVE IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC, PARTICULARLY THE LOSS OF MILLIONS OF LIVES AND GROSS DISRUPTION TO SOCIOECONOMIC ACTIVITIES.

AS THE WORLD CONTINUES TO RECOVER FROM THE PANDEMIC, IT IS NECESSARY TO FIND LASTING SOLUTIONS, INCLUDING

INVESTMENT IN RESILIENT HEALTH SYSTEMS THAT WILL RESPOND TO FUTURE PANDEMICS OF THE LIKES THAT WE HAVE WITNESSED WITH COVID-19, AMONG OTHERS.

THIS ENTAILS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A VERSATILE INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH REGIME THAT WILL BE DEVOID OF HOARDING VACCINES AND RELATED TECHNOLOGIES TO GUARANTEE RAPID DEPLOYMENT OF SUPPLIES FROM A GLOBAL RESERVE TO TACKLE FUTURE PANDEMICS.

MR. PRESIDENT,

THE RE-EMERGENCE OF POLIO IN OUR WORLD, IS OF GREAT CONCERN, AND AS SUCH, ZAMBIA IS PARTICIPATING IN SUPPLEMENTARY IMMUNIZATION ACTIVITIES, ALONG WITH A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES IN OUR REGION, IN ORDER TO PREVENT AND HALT THE SPREAD OF THE WILD POLIO VIRUS TYPE ONE.

THIS IS IN ADDITION TO ON-GOING ACTIVITIES TO FIGHT OTHER VACCINE PREVENTABLE DISEASES SUCH AS MEASLES; AS WELL AS TO STRENGTHEN OUR ROUTINE IMMUNIZATION AND MAINTAIN

ESSENTIAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH.

AS THE GLOBAL CHOLERA CONTROL CHAMPION, WITH MANY THANKS TO THE W.H.O, OUR FIGHT AGAINST CHOLERA MUST CONTINUE WITH VIGOR.

WE ALSO NEED TO REMAIN ALERT TO ANY POSSIBLE OUTBREAKS OF MONKEY POX, EBOLA VIRUS DISEASE AND OTHER THREATS.

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY MUST WORK TOGETHER TO ADDRESS THE GROWING THREAT TO THE ENVIRONMENT, HUMAN AND ANIMAL HEALTH RESULTING FROM ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE, COMMONLY REFERRED TO AS "DRUG RESISTANCE".

DRUG-RESISTANT BACTERIAL INFECTIONS CONTINUE TO CAUSE MILLIONS OF DEATHS, WHERE SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA HAS THE GREATEST BURDEN OF RESISTANT-BACTERIAL INFECTIONS, ACCOUNTING FOR A GREATER PROPORTION OF DEATHS.

THIS CALLS FOR GREATER CONTROL SYSTEMS IN ACCESS TO ANTIMICROBIAL MEDICINES FOR BOTH HUMAN AND ANIMAL USE.

I SHALL NOW FOCUS ON OTHER AREAS OF INTEREST.

1. ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE

MR. PRESIDENT,

THE UKRAINE CRISIS HAS HAMPERED THE RECOVERY THAT WAS SLOWLY TAKING HOLD, PARTICULARLY IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD WHERE LARGE SECTIONS OF SOCIETY REMAIN IN EXTREME POVERTY AND INEQUALITIES WIDEN.

WITH THE ATTAINMENT OF THE SDGS, OFF-TRACK COUNTRIES MUST INTENSIFY NATIONAL CONSULTATIVE PROCESSES AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENTS AND RENEW COMMITMENTS TO POVERTY ERADICATION, TACKLE ENERGY POVERTY, SUPPORT TO DEBT RESTRUCTURING AND ENHANCED CONCESSIONAL FINANCE.

ON OUR PART, WE HEREBY INDICATE IN THIS REGARD, OUR INTENTION TO PRESENT OUR SECOND VOLUNTARY NATIONAL

REVIEW (VNR) IN JULY 2023, TO HIGHLIGHT ZAMBIA'S PROGRESS TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS.

DESPITE THE CHALLENGING EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT, OUR RESOLVE TO REBUILD THE ZAMBIAN ECONOMY REMAINS STRONG.

OUR ECONOMIC RECOVERY IS ON TRACK, AS EVIDENCED BY THE POSITIVE GROWTH INDICATORS AND STABILIZATION OF KEY MACROECONOMIC VARIABLES, SUCH AS INTEREST RATES, EXCHANGE RATE STABILITY, AND INFLATION, WHICH WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO REDUCE FROM 25% TO 9.8% IN ONE YEAR OF BEING IN OFFICE.

MR. PRESIDENT,

ZAMBIA IS ON A PATH OF GROWTH FROM THE ECONOMIC CONTRACTION AT MINUS 2%, TO GDP GROWTH ESTIMATED AT OVER 3% WITHIN ONE YEAR OF OUR TAKING OFFICE.

IN TERMS OF SOCIAL ECONOMIC BENEFITS, OUR COMMITMENT TO PROVIDING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES, ESPECIALLY FOR THE YOUNG PEOPLE HAS BEEN DEMONSTRATED BY THE INTRODUCTION OF FREE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION, AS WE BELIEVE THAT EDUCATION IS THE BEST EQUALIZER, THE BEST INVESTMENT, AND THE BEST INHERITANCE, WITHOUT DOUBT.

CONSISTENT WITH OUR PLEDGE TO INVEST IN HUMAN CAPITAL, WE HAVE RECRUITED OVER 30,000 TEACHERS AND OVER 11,000 HEALTH WORKERS, IN 2022 ALONE.

WE ARE DECENTRALIZING SERVICE DELIVERY AND HAVE INCREASED THE ALLOCATION OF THE CONSTITUENCY DEVELOPMENT FUND BY OVER 1,000% IN OUR FIRST BUDGET IN OFFICE.

EXPENDITURE OF THESE FUNDS AT COMMUNITY LEVEL IS MEANT TO ENSURE INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH THAT WILL SUPPORT SME DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT CREATION.

I AM PLEASED TO NOTE THAT WE HAVE REACHED IN PRINCIPLE, AGREEMENT WITH CREDITORS UNDER THE COMMON FRAMEWORK TO RESTRUCTURE THE NATIONAL DEBT WE INHERITED AND HAVE CONCLUDED AN IMF DEAL BASED ON OUR HOME-GROWN ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION PLAN.

WE SAY MANY THANKS TO THE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND, WORLD BANK, UN SYSTEM AND OTHER COOPERATING PARTNERS FOR YOUR SUPPORT.

2. CLIMATE CHANGE

MR. PRESIDENT,

THE ADVERSE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE HAVE CONTINUED TO RAVAGE OUR PLANET.

IN ADDRESSING THE EMERGING GLOBAL CRISIS ON CLIMATE CHANGE, ALLOW ME TO CITE A SITUATION IN ZAMBIA, WHERE RECENTLY, ONE HALF OF THE COUNTRY EXPERIENCED TOTAL CROP FAILURE DUE TO EXTREME DROUGHT, WHILE THE OTHER HALF EXPERIENCED FLOODING IN THE SAME SEASON.

SUCH EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS ARE A TIMELY REMINDER OF THE GRAVE CONSEQUENCES OF CLIMATE CHANGE.

WE, THEREFORE, NEED ROBUST SOLUTIONS AND COHESION IN OUR APPROACH AT THE GLOBAL AND REGIONAL LEVELS TO ADDRESS THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE.

AS CHAIR OF THE AFRICAN GROUP OF NEGOTIATORS ON CLIMATE CHANGE, ZAMBIA CALLS FOR ENHANCED GLOBAL EFFORTS IN ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE, WHICH SHOULD INCLUDE INCREASED FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR COUNTRIES WITH LIMITED RESOURCES TO MITIGATE AND ADAPT TO THE EFFECTS AND IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE.

ZAMBIA HAS MAINSTREAMED GREEN GROWTH AND CLIMATE CHANGE-PROOFING IN THE CURRENT NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**PLAN, WHICH HAS ARTICULATED BROAD POLICY MEASURES ON
TRANSITIONING ZAMBIA INTO A CLIMATE-RESILIENT AND
INCLUSIVE GREEN ECONOMY.**

3. GENDER

MR. PRESIDENT,

**ZAMBIA HAS CONTINUED TO BUILD ON THE EFFORTS OF
ATTAINING GENDER EQUALITY AND INCLUSIVITY IN THE
VARIOUS SECTORS OF OUR SOCIETY.**

**BASED ON EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE, WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND
POVERTY ALLEVIATION ARE POSITIVELY CORRELATED.**

**IT IS, THEREFORE, IMPERATIVE THAT WE DEDICATE
CORRESPONDING EFFORTS TO ENSURE THAT GENDER
DISPARITIES ARE CURTAILED.**

ZAMBIA, UNDER OUR NATIONAL GENDER POLICY, HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTING AFFIRMATIVE ACTION, IN FAVOUR OF WOMEN AND GIRLS, TO ENSURE THAT THEIR FULL POTENTIAL IS REALISED.

4. ENDING CHILD MARRIAGE

TO COMPLEMENT THESE MEASURES, ZAMBIA IS CHAMPIONING THE CAMPAIGN TO END CHILD MARRIAGE IN AFRICA.

IN THE SAME VEIN, WE ARE PROUD TO INFORM THIS ASSEMBLY THAT THIS MORNING, ZAMBIA, CANADA AND OTHER COOPERATING PARTNERS HELD A SIDE EVENT TO GALVANISE SUPPORT AND RENEW COMMITMENT FROM THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TOWARDS ENDING CHILD, EARLY AND FORCED MARRIAGE.

WITH THE ASSURANCES MADE DURING THIS EVENT, WE ARE HOPEFUL THAT WE SHALL BE ABLE TO ACHIEVE THE SUSTAINABLE

DEVELOPMENT GOAL ON GENDER EQUALITY, (TARGET 5.3) THAT AIMS AT ELIMINATING THIS HARMFUL PRACTICE.

5. INTERNATIONAL PEACE, SECURITY AND STABILITY

MR. PRESIDENT,

THE WORLD AT LARGE HAS GRAPPLED WITH GROWING INSTABILITY AND INSECURITY WITHIN THE LAST YEAR, AND THE EFFECTS HAVE BEEN FELT BY MILLIONS OF PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD AS LIVES AND LIVELIHOODS HAVE BEEN LOST.

ZAMBIA BELIEVES THAT WITHOUT PEACE AND STABILITY, OUR JOINT DEVELOPMENTAL EFFORTS ARE IN VAIN.

AS SUCH, WE ARE COMMITTED TO REMAIN STRONG ADVOCATES OF PEACE AND STABILITY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, THE ENTIRE AFRICAN CONTINENT AND THE WORLD OVER.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLE THAT "INSTABILITY ANYWHERE, IS INSTABILITY EVERYWHERE" REMINDS US THAT ENDING WAR AND CONFLICT IS NOT ONLY THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THOSE DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE CONFLICT, BUT THE SHARED OBLIGATION OF EVERY GLOBAL CITIZEN AND INDEED EVERY NATION – I MEAN ALL OF US WITHOUT EXCEPTION.

WE, THEREFORE TAKE THIS MATTER SERIOUSLY AND SHALL CONTINUE TO ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN EFFORTS TO RESTORE PEACE IN ALL THE TROUBLED REGIONS OF OUR CONTINENT.

AS THE IN-COMING CHAIR OF THE SADC ORGAN ON POLITICS, DEFENCE AND SECURITY COOPERATION, ZAMBIA WILL PRIORITIZE THE RESTORATION OF PEACE AND STABILITY IN OUR COUNTRY AND REGION.

AS IT IS SAID, CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME.

AT THE CONTINENTAL LEVEL, ZAMBIA REMAINS ENGAGED AND COMMITTED TO THE EFFORTS OF THE AFRICAN UNION AND THE UNITED NATIONS IN PROMOTING PEACE IN THE VARIOUS CONFLICT AREAS.

GOING FORWARD OUR UN SYSTEM SHOULD TILT MORE EFFORTS TOWARDS PREVENTION OF CONFLICTS, WHICH IS MORE COST EFFECTIVE AND PALATABLE.

ZAMBIA AS A SIGNATORY TO VARIOUS DISARMAMENT TREATIES AND CONVENTIONS REMAINS COMMITTED TO PROMOTING GLOBAL PEACE AND SECURITY.

MR. PRESIDENT,

ZAMBIA JOINS WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS IN EXPRESSING PARTICULAR CONCERN ABOUT THE ONGOING WAR IN UKRAINE.

AS WE STAND WITH ALL THOSE AFFECTED, BOTH IN UKRAINE AND IN NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES, WE ALSO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO STRESS THE FAR-REACHING AND NEGATIVE

CONSEQUENCES OF THIS WAR, PARTICULARLY ON THE PRICES OF FOOD, FUEL, FERTILISER AND OTHER KEY COMMODITIES,

WAR, IN ANY PART OF THE WORLD, HAS DAMAGING EFFECTS ON ECONOMIC ACTIVITY, WHICH DERAILS OUR COLLECTIVE FIGHT AGAINST POVERTY AND HUNGER.

A FEW MONTHS OF WAR CAN ERASE DECADES OF PROGRESS.

WE, THEREFORE, CATEGORICALLY CONDEMN WAR ANYWHERE AND WE CONTINUE TO URGE ALL PARTIES INVOLVED TO PURSUE DIPLOMATIC SOLUTIONS TO CONFLICT.

OUR UN SHOULD CONTINUE WITH ITS PEACE EFFORTS.

6. UN REFORMS

WE WISH TO STRESS THAT GLOBAL AMBITIONS TOWARDS PEACE AND SECURITY LARGELY DEPEND ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL.

THE INADEQUACIES OF THE CURRENT STRUCTURE OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL, HOWEVER, HAVE BECOME INCREASINGLY PRONOUNCED WITH CEDING OF DECISION-MAKING ON MATTERS OF GLOBAL PEACE AND SECURITY TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THAT OTHERWISE WOULD HAVE BEEN ITS PRESERVE.

THIS BRINGS TO THE FORE THE NEED FOR THE LONG OVERDUE REFORMS OF THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL.

WE, THEREFORE, CONTINUE TO ADVANCE THE AFRICAN COMMON POSITION, AS ESPOUSED IN THE "EZULWINI CONSENSUS" AND THE SIRTE DECLARATION, TO ENSURE THE EFFECTIVENESS, CREDIBILITY AND LEGITIMACY OF THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL.

CONCLUSION

IN CONCLUSION, MR. PRESIDENT, WE WISH TO REAFFIRM ZAMBIA'S COMMITMENT TO THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES ON WHICH THE UNITED NATIONS WAS FOUNDED, WHICH SAFEGUARD OUR SHARED FUTURE OF PEACE AND PROSPERITY FOR ALL NATIONS.

I THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND ATTENTION.