



# REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA



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## SPEECH

DELIVERED BY

HIS EXCELLENCY MR. MICHAEL CHILUFYA SATA

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

AT

THE 67TH REGULAR SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

New York

26 September, 2012.



- YOUR EXCELLENCY, MR. VUK JEREMIC, PRESIDENT OF THE 67<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY;
- YOUR EXCELLENCY, MR BAN KI-MOON, SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS;
- YOUR EXCELLENCIES, HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENTS;
- DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES;
- LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

I AM GREATLY HONOURED TO DELIVER MY INAUGURAL ADDRESS TO THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY. ALLOW ME TO BEGIN BY CONGRATULATING YOU, MR. PRESIDENT, ON YOUR ELECTION TO OVERSEE THE 67<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, AND TO WISH YOU ALL THE SUCCESS IN THIS POSITION. YOUR GREAT COUNTRY, SERBIA HAS HISTORICALLY ENJOYED CLOSE TIES WITH ZAMBIA. WE ARE THEREFORE, DELIGHTED TO SEE YOU IN THAT IMPORTANT SEAT.

I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK HIS EXCELLENCY, MR. BAN KI-MOON, SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS FOR CONVENING THIS IMPORTANT SESSION AND FOR THE STEADY MANNER IN WHICH HE HAS CONTINUED STEERING OUR GLOBAL ORGANISATION. IN ZAMBIA, WE ARE PARTICULARLY APPRECIATIVE THAT DESPITE YOUR BUSY SCHEDULE, MR. SECRETARY-GENERAL, YOU MADE TIME TO VISIT OUR COUNTRY EARLIER IN THE YEAR TO UNDERTAKE SOME IMPORTANT PROGRAMMES.

**MR. PRESIDENT,**

ABOUT A YEAR AGO, I ENDED MY DECADE LONG CAREER AS AN OPPOSITION POLITICIAN WHEN THE PEOPLE OF ZAMBIA OVERWHELMINGLY CHOSE TO CHANGE THEIR POLITICAL LEADERSHIP THROUGH A DEMOCRATIC AND PEACEFUL ELECTORAL TRANSITION THAT USHERED ME INTO OFFICE AS THE FIFTH REPUBLICAN PRESIDENT. I AM INDEBTED TO MY PEOPLE FOR ONCE AGAIN UNDERTAKING THIS PROCESS IN A PEACEFUL MANNER.

IT IS MY DESIRE TO UTILISE MY EXPERIENCE AT BOTH ENDS OF THE LEADERSHIP SPECTRUM TO MAKE A WORTHWHILE CONTRIBUTION TO OUR DEMOCRACY. I TRUST THAT ZAMBIA WILL BE ABLE TO SHARE HER LESSONS AND TO EQUALLY LEARN FROM THOSE WITH LONGER OR EVEN BETTER DEMOCRATIC EXPERIENCES.

**MR. PRESIDENT,**

AS YOU KNOW, WE ARE STILL FACED WITH CONSIDERABLE CHALLENGES, IN TERMS OF MEETING THE BASIC NEEDS OF THE MAJORITY OF THE ZAMBIAN PEOPLE. SHORTLY BEFORE I WAS USHERED INTO OFFICE, THERE WAS MUCH PUBLICITY OF THE POSITIVE MACRO-ECONOMIC INDICATORS, BUT THESE RESULTS DID NOT TRICKLE DOWN TO THE AVERAGE CITIZENRY.

IN THE QUEST TO TAKE DEVELOPMENT TO THE MICRO LEVEL, MY NEW GOVERNMENT'S FOCUS IS TO ENHANCE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY AND ACCESS TO MARKETS FOR PEASANTS AND SMALL SCALE FARMERS, PROVIDE IMPROVED HEALTH SERVICES AS CLOSE TO THE FAMILIES AS POSSIBLE, IMPROVE QUALITY OF EDUCATION, AND, FACILITATE ACCESS TO DECENT HOUSING AND ACCOMMODATION.

**MR. PRESIDENT,**

AS WE DRAW CLOSER TO THE DEADLINE OF THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN 2015, THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY NEEDS TO MAXIMIZE ITS EFFORTS TOWARDS ACHIEVING ALL THE EIGHT (8) GOALS. ZAMBIA HAS MADE STEADY PROGRESS IN ACHIEVING SOME OF THE MDGs.

THESE ARE MOST VISIBLE IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR WHICH HAS SEEN AN INCREASE IN THE NET ENROLMENT OF CHILDREN IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS; WHILE THE HEALTH SECTOR HAS SEEN REDUCTIONS IN THE PREVALENCE OF HIV AND AIDS, TUBERCULOSIS AND MALARIA.

NOTWITHSTANDING THE ABOVE COMMUNICABLE DISEASES, ZAMBIA IS ALSO ATTEMPTING TO ADDRESS NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES SUCH AS HYPERTENSION, DIABETES AND CANCER.

WHILST STILL ON THE HEALTH SECTOR, ALLOW ME TO MENTION THAT MY GOVERNMENT RECENTLY INHERITED STATISTICS WHICH INDICATE THAT ZAMBIA NOW HAS THE SECOND HIGHEST RATES OF CERVICAL CANCER IN THE WORLD.

FROM 22<sup>ND</sup> TO 24<sup>TH</sup> JULY THIS YEAR, OUR CAPITAL, LUSAKA HOSTED THE 6<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE KNOWN AS "*THE STOP CERVICAL CANCER IN AFRICA CONFERENCE*" WHICH WAS INCORPORATED BY THE FORUM OF AFRICAN FIRST LADIES AGAINST BREAST AND CERVICAL CANCER, AND THE AFRICAN PARLIAMENTARIANS AND HEALTH MINISTERS AGAINST CANCER.

AND ONLY LAST YEAR FORMER US PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH TRAVELLED TO LUSAKA TO LAUNCH THE PINK RIBBON RED RIBBON (PRRR) CAMPAIGN AGAINST BREAST AND CERVICAL CANCER. HE HAS SINCE FACILITATED SOME GENEROUS CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE FACILITIES NOW IN PLACE TO FIGHT THESE DISEASES. I WANT TO RENDER THE ZAMBIAN PEOPLE'S DEEP APPRECIATION FOR ALL THIS EFFORT. HOWEVER, THE CHALLENGES IN THE HEALTH SECTOR AND ELSEWHERE DO NOT END THERE, AND BY NO MEANS HAVE WE BEEN FOLDING OUR ARMS.

**MR. PRESIDENT,**

SINCE MY GOVERNMENT ASSUMED POWER IN SEPTEMBER, 2011 THE COUNTRY HAS SEEN REASONABLE IMPROVEMENTS IN OUR ECONOMY WITH AN INFLATION RATE DOWN TO 6.6 PER CENT AND A GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP) GROWTH RATE IN THE REGION OF 6 PER CENT IN SPITE OF THE LOW GLOBAL ECONOMIC TRENDS. THIS HAS BEEN ATTRIBUTED TO THE ENHANCEMENT OF THE INVESTMENT POLICY FRAMEWORK AND IMPROVING INFRASTRUCTURE AND HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT. DESPITE THESE EFFORTS HOWEVER, 60.5 PER CENT OF THE ZAMBIAN PEOPLE CONTINUE TO LIVE IN POVERTY.

MY GOVERNMENT ATTACHES SIMILAR IMPORTANCE TO PROMOTING GOOD GOVERNANCE, AND AS SUCH WE HAVE PUT IN PLACE A ROBUST ANTI-CORRUPTION PROGRAMME, WITH IMPROVED AND INCREASED RESOURCES WHICH SHOULD SET A NEW STAGE IN OUR DEVELOPMENT.

IN ADDITION, ZAMBIA HAS FOR THE FIRST TIME ENTRUSTED THE RUNNING OF GOVERNANCE AND LEGAL-JUDICIAL INSTITUTIONS TO OUR WOMEN FOLK. THE INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF POLICE IS FEMALE, CHIEF JUSTICE AND DEPUTY ARE FEMALE, CHAIRPERSON OF THE ANTI-CORRUPTION COMMISSION IS FEMALE, AND SO IS THE COMMISSIONER FOR THE DRUG ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION. I REMAIN CONVINCED THAT THEY WILL IMPROVE OUR RECORD AND SURPASS THE NATION'S EXPECTATIONS.

OUR NATIONAL PROGRAMMES ARE ALSO FOCUSED ON CREATING EMPLOYMENT FOR OUR YOUTH. DESPITE THE VAST NATURAL RESOURCES, UNEMPLOYMENT CONTINUES TO BE THE MOST PRESSING PROBLEM FOR THE YOUNGER GENERATION. WE ARE THEREFORE LOOKING TO IMPROVING PARTNERSHIP WITH THE VARIOUS UN AGENCIES AND THE REST OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO HARNESS THE BEST PRACTICES FROM ACROSS THE WORLD.

IT IS AFTER ALL THE YOUTH OF 2012 WHO HAVE MADE ZAMBIA THE AFRICAN FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS.

**MR. PRESIDENT,**

MY GOVERNMENT HAS RECOGNIZED THAT WITHOUT THE RULE OF LAW, SOCIAL JUSTICE AND AN INDEPENDENT JUDICIAL SYSTEM, ZAMBIA WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ATTAIN SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. AS AN INITIAL STEP IN THIS REGARD, MY GOVERNMENT IS CURRENTLY UNDERTAKING A CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW PROCESS WHICH IS INTENDED TO ENSURE THE PRESTIGE OF THE INDIVIDUAL CITIZEN AND HIS LIBERTIES.

WE FURTHER WISH TO SPEED UP THE PROCESS OF DOMESTICATING THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS THAT SEEK TO BRIDGE THE GAPS FOR THE MINORITY. SPECIAL EMPHASIS WILL ALSO BE PLACED ON IMPROVING THE TREATMENT OF THE MENTALLY AND PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED PERSONS.

**MR PRESIDENT**

ZAMBIA PARTICIPATED IN THE PROCESS LEADING TO THE RIO+20 WORLD CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. WE HAVE OVER THE YEARS LEARNT TO APPRECIATE THE TRANS-BOUNDARY NATURE OF MATTERS SUCH AS OUR COMMON ENVIRONMENT.

HERE, I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE GOVERNMENT OF BRAZIL, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE CONFERENCE AND ALL WHO MADE TREMENDOUS EFFORT TO BRING ABOUT THE FINAL OUTCOME DOCUMENT OF THIS HISTORIC CONFERENCE. WE ARE HOWEVER CONCERNED THAT AS UN MEMBER STATES WE MISSED THE OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP A FORMIDABLE INTERNATIONAL PROCESS FOR PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

THE FAILURE TO COMMIT ANY FUNDS TO THE MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION AND INDEED THE LITTLE PROGRESS IN OUTLINING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS UNDERScoreD THE LACK OF AMBITION IN ADDRESSING OUR DETERIORATING ENVIRONMENT, WORSENING INEQUALITY AND A GROWING GLOBAL POPULATION WHICH SHARES THE EARTH'S LIMITED RESOURCES. IN THIS INSTANCE, WE FAILED THE TEST FOR GLOBAL SOLIDARITY.

TODAY, ZAMBIA IS ENCOURAGED THAT THREE COMMITTED GLOBAL CITIZENS HAVE BEEN APPOINTED AS CO-CHAIRS OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S HIGH LEVEL PANEL TO ADVISE ON THE POST-2015 GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT AGENDA.

WE THEREFORE, CONGRATULATE HIS EXCELLENCY PRESIDENT SUSILO BAMBANG OF INDONESIA, HER EXCELLENCY PRESIDENT ELLEN JOHNSON SIRLEAF OF LIBERIA, AND HIS EXCELLENCY PRIME MINISTER DAVID CAMERON OF THE UNITED KINGDOM AND WE WISH THEM EVERY SUCCESS AS THEY TAKE ON THIS ONEROUS TASK.

WE MUST SUPPORT THIS HIGH LEVEL PANEL TO HELP RECOUP THE LOST OPPORTUNITIES OF THE RECENT PAST. AS I INDICATED EARLIER, WE ARE STILL A LONG WAY FROM ATTAINING THE MDGS. DISCARDING THEM ENTIRELY WOULD BE TO THE DETRIMENT OF THE POORER NATIONS. I TRUST THAT THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S PANEL WILL TAKE THIS INTO CONSIDERATION.

**MR. PRESIDENT,**

THIS YEAR'S GENERAL ASSEMBLY THEME "*ADJUSTMENT OR SETTLEMENT OF INTERNATIONAL DISPUTES OR SITUATIONS BY PEACEFUL MEANS*" IS UNDENIABLY SIGNIFICANT IN THE WAKE OF THE TURMOIL THAT CONTINUES TO THREATEN INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY, WITH THE PERSISTENT CONFLICT SITUATIONS ON THE AFRICAN CONTINENT IN PLACES SUCH AS SUDAN, SOUTH SUDAN, GUINEA BISSAU, MALI, AND SOMALIA.

I THEREFORE WISH TO REPORT THAT MY GOVERNMENT HAS IN CERTAIN INSTANCES SUPPORTED MEASURES TO HELP MITIGATE THE HUMANITARIAN SITUATION. I URGE THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO REDOUBLE EFFORTS IN BRINGING PEACE TO THESE TROUBLED REGIONS.

FURTHER AFIELD, BUT NO LESS IMPORTANT IS THE SITUATION IN SYRIA, WHICH HAS SEEN THE INDISCRIMINATE KILLING OF MANY INNOCENT LIVES. THERE IS THEREFORE, NEED FOR CONCERTED EFFORTS TO UTILISE PEACEFUL MEANS SUCH AS MEDIATION AND NEGOTIATIONS TO BRING A HALT TO THE KILLINGS AND RESTORE PEACE TO THE COUNTRY. HUMANITY HAS AGAIN BEEN EMBARRASSED BY THIS UNNECESSARY CARNAGE.

**MR. PRESIDENT**

DESPITE THE TROUBLE SPOTS, ZAMBIA REMAINS CONVINCED THAT THE UNITED NATIONS HAS SINCE 1945 PERFORMED CONSIDERABLY WELL. HOWEVER, THE CIRCUMSTANCES HAVE SINCE CHANGED GREATLY, AND, WE NEED ONLY LOOK AT THE SOVEREIGN REPRESENTATION IN THIS HALL TO PROVE THAT.

IT IS THEREFORE, IMPERATIVE THAT THE ONGOING EFFORTS AT REFORMING THE UN BE APPROACHED WITH RENEWED VIGOUR. WE ARE CONCERNED THAT A SEEMINGLY DIFFICULT DEADLOCK HAS BEEN CREATED IN THE REFORM PROCESS OF THE UNITED NATIONS.

IN ADDITION, I WISH TO REITERATE THAT DESPITE THE SLOW PROCESS OF THE REFORM OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL, AFRICA SHOULD NOT RELENT OR GET FRUSTRATED. WE SHOULD STAND UP AND BE COUNTED. AS ENSHRINED IN THE EZULWINI CONSENSUS AND SIRTE DECLARATION, AFRICA MUST BE GIVEN TWO PERMANENT SEATS WITH A VETO IMMEDIATELY EXERCISABLE AND TWO NON PERMANENT SEATS TO CORRECT THE HISTORICAL INJUSTICE THAT THE CONTINENT HAS SUFFERED AND ALSO ADHERE TO THE GEO POLITICAL REALITIES OF MODERN TIMES. FURTHER, THE COUNCIL SHOULD IMPROVE ITS WORKING METHODS.

**MR. PRESIDENT,**

I WISH TO APPEAL TO ALL NATIONS TO RENEW THEIR COMMITMENT AND STRIVE FOR A NEW COMMON GROUND WHERE THE INDIVIDUAL NATIONAL INTEREST SHOULD TAKE A BACK SEAT. JUST AS MANY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS HAVE BEEN SUBJECT TO INNOVATIVE TRANSLATIONS IN THE RECENT PAST, WE MUST PLAN TO BE AS FLEXIBLE IN CREATING A NEW UNITED NATIONS, SOONER RATHER THAN LATER. TO IGNORE THIS NEED FOR TRANSFORMATION WOULD BE TANTAMOUNT TO KILLING THIS ORGANISATION.

**I THANK YOU MR. PRESIDENT.**