

ADDRESS

BY

**HIS EXCELLENCY MR. EDGAR CHAGWA LUNGU
PRESIDENT AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA,**

**ON THE PROGRESS MADE IN THE APPLICATION OF
NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES**

**DELIVERED TO THE SECOND MEETING OF THE FIRST
SESSION OF THE TWELFTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.**

17TH MARCH, 2017

INTRODUCTION

MR. SPEAKER,

1. THIS IS ANOTHER SPECIAL DAY IN THE HISTORY OF OUR NATION, WHEN I AM OBLIGED BY THE CONSTITUTION TO ADDRESS THIS AUGUST HOUSE FOR THE SECOND TIME IN ONE SESSION OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.
2. THIS ADDRESS IS DIFFERENT FROM THE OPENING ADDRESS TO PARLIAMENT AS ITS FOCUS IS ON THE APPLICATION OF OUR NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES AS ENSHRINED IN THE REPUBLICAN CONSTITUTION UNDER ARTICLES 8, 9 AND 86, SUB-ARTICLE (1), WHICH MANY PEOPLE MAY NOT BE AWARE OF.
3. THIS ADDRESS WILL SERVE AS A PLATFORM FOR THE NATION TO REFLECT AND DEBATE ON THE STATE OF THE NATION WITH RESPECT TO THE APPLICATION OF OUR NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES. THE REFLECTIONS AND DEBATES SHOULD CREATE A COMMON GROUND OF UNDERSTANDING AND REINFORCEMENT OF OUR COMMITMENT AS A NATION TO THE APPLICATION OF THE VALUES AND PRINCIPLES ON WHO WE ARE AS A PEOPLE.

THIS IN TURN WILL GIVE US THE REALISATION THAT MORAL, SPIRITUAL, ETHICAL AND CULTURAL VALUES ARE PARAMOUNT TO FULFILLING THE DEVELOPMENTAL AGENDA OF ANY NATION.

MR. SPEAKER,

4. THIS ADDRESS THEREFORE, SHOULD GIVE US ALL AN OPPORTUNITY TO REFLECT ON THE IMPORTANCE OF NATIONAL UNITY, PEACE AND SOVREIGNITY OF OUR NATION AND THE ROLE THAT EACH AND EVERY INDIVIDUAL MUST PLAY TO SAFEGUARD OUR NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES.
5. BEING THE FIRST TIME I AM ADDRESSING THIS AUGUST HOUSE ON THE APPLICATION OF THE NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES, IT IS IMPORTANT FOR US TO HAVE A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT THESE VALUES AND PRINCIPLES MEAN.

MR. SPEAKER,

6. OUR NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES ARE A SET OF BELIEFS AND GUIDELINES MEANT TO PROVIDE US, AS A NATION, WITH A FOUNDATION UPON WHICH OUR IDENTITY AND PRACTICES ARE ANCHORED.

- i. THEY ARE OUR COMPASS;
- ii. THEY ARE OUR PILLAR;
- iii. THEY ARE INDEED OUR FOUNDATION.

7. THE REPUBLICAN CONSTITUTION OUTLINES OUR NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES WHICH INCLUDE, BUT NOT LIMITED TO:

- i. MORALITY AND ETHICS;
- ii. PATRIOTISM AND NATIONAL UNITY;
- iii. DEMOCRACY AND CONSTITUTIONALISM;
- iv. HUMAN DIGNITY, EQUITY, SOCIAL JUSTICE, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION;
- v. GOOD GOVERNANCE AND INTEGRITY; AND
- vi. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

8. THE CONSTITUTION FURTHER DEMANDS THAT THESE VALUES AND PRINCIPLES BE APPLIED IN THE INTERPRETATION OF THE REPUBLICAN CONSTITUTION, ENACTMENT AND INTERPRETATION OF THE LAWS AND DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE POLICIES. WE MUST BE COMMITTED, AS A NATION, TO ABIDE BY THESE PROVISIONS.

MR. SPEAKER,

9. THIS ADDRESS WILL FOCUS ON GIVING EVERY ZAMBIAN AND THIS ASSEMBLY, AN UNDERSTANDING OF OUR NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES, WHICH AS WE GO FORWARD, WILL BE HIGHLIGHTED, TO GUIDE THEIR IMPLEMENTATION BY GOVERNMENT.

10. THE PREAMBLE AS PROVIDED FOR IN OUR CONSTITUTION IS UNEQUIVOCAL AND SUCCINCT IN THE DECLARATION OF ZAMBIA AS A CHRISTIAN NATION, WHILE UPHOLDING EVERY PERSON'S RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE, BELIEF OR RELIGION. THIS DECLARATION IS THE BASIS OF OUR NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES. THE DECLARATION, NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES ARE IMPORTANT AS THEY ARE EXPECTED TO SHAPE OUR ATTITUDES, AS WELL AS OUR GENERAL DISPOSITION AND ACTIONS.

11. LET ME NOW ADDRESS THE SPECIFIC NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES.

MORALITY AND ETHICS

MR. SPEAKER,

12. AS A CHRISTIAN NATION, WE ARE GUIDED BY THE WORD OF GOD ON WHAT IS RIGHT AND WHAT IS WRONG. THEREFORE, AS A NATION, WE ENCOMPASS MORALITY AND ETHICS, AS VALUES THAT DEAL WITH WHAT WE COLLECTIVELY BELIEVE TO BE RIGHT OR WRONG. WE MUST, THEREFORE, ENDEAVOUR TO ADHERE TO THESE VALUES TO THE BEST OF OUR ABILITY.

13. AS A NATION, THERE IS SUFFICIENT REASON FOR US TO UPHOLD GOOD MORALS AND ETHICS. IT IS WORTH NOTING, IN THEIR ABSENCE, THEY MAY LEAD TO THE DEGRADATION OF OUR CULTURAL VALUES AND SOCIAL FABRIC OF OUR NATION. WHEN THIS HAPPENS, TRUST IS EASILY LOST BETWEEN INDIVIDUALS, OR BETWEEN THE ELECTORATE AND THEIR REPRESENTATIVES AND EVEN BETWEEN PLAYERS IN THE CORPORATE WORLD. THIS BREAKDOWN OF TRUST IS COSTLY TO OUR COUNTRY AT ANY GIVEN MOMENT IN TIME, AS IT REPRESENTS MISSED OPPORTUNITIES TO BUILD A BETTER NATION.

MR SPEAKER,

14. WE SEE SYMPTOMS OF MORAL DECAY IN THE EVER INCREASING CASES OF EXAMINATION MALPRACTICES, ABSENTEEISM AT PLACES OF WORK, CHILD DEFILEMENT AND GENDER BASED VIOLENCE, TO MENTION, BUT A FEW. THIS IS WORRISOME AND INDICATIVE OF THE EROSION OF GOOD MORALS AND ETHICS IN OUR SOCIETY, AND THIS SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO CONTINUE.
15. IF WE REMAIN ON THIS PATH, OUR MORAL FABRIC WILL BE ERODED AND THIS ULTIMATELY MAY TARNISH OUR NATIONAL IDENTITY IN THE COMMUNITY OF NATIONS.
 - i. WE MUST CHANGE FOR THE BETTER.
 - ii. WE MUST REGAIN THE MORAL HIGH GROUND AND ENTRENCH ETHICAL STANDARDS IN ALL OUR TRANSACTIONS AND ACTIONS AS ZAMBIANS.
 - iii. WE MUST CARRY OURSELVES FORWARD AS A NATION.

MR. SPEAKER,

16. IN THIS REGARD, GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED IN ENSURING THAT GOOD MORALS AND ETHICS ARE ENHANCED. IN A BID TO ENTRENCH ETHICS IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE, THE FIRST EVER CODE OF ETHICS FOR THE PUBLIC SERVICE WAS ADOPTED IN 2008.

THE CODE ESPOUSES AND INCULCATES THE VALUES OF HONESTY, OBJECTIVITY, IMPARTIALITY, LOYALTY, RESPECT, ACCOUNTABILITY, EXCELLENCE, CONFIDENTIALITY, INTEGRITY AND SELFLESSNESS FOR THE GOOD OF OUR COUNTRY.

17. THEREFORE, GOVERNMENT HAS INTRODUCED A REQUIREMENT FOR EVERY PUBLIC SERVICE OFFICER TO SIGN UP TO THE CODE OF ETHICS TO UNDERLINE ONE'S COMMITMENT TO ABIDE BY PROVISIONS OF THE CODE IN BOTH THEIR OFFICIAL AND PRIVATE LIVES.

18. BY SO DOING, THE OFFICERS ALSO AGREE THAT THEIR PERFORMANCE WILL BE EVALUATED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CODE. TO THIS EFFECT, I AM REDIRECTING THE SECRETARY TO CABINET TO ENSURE THAT THIS IS STRICTLY ADHERED TO.

19. FURTHER AND CONSEQUENTIAL TO THE CONSTITUTION, GOVERNMENT WILL STRENGTHEN THE FRAMEWORK GUIDING THE SCOPE, IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF MORALS AND ETHICS AMONG PUBLIC AND STATE OFFICERS. WE NEED A PUBLIC SERVICE AND STATE OFFICES THAT ARE ACCOUNTABLE AND ABOVE BOARD IN THE CONDUCT OF THE AFFAIRS OF THE STATE.

MR SPEAKER,

20. I AM AWARE THAT A NUMBER OF PRIVATE SECTOR ORGANISATIONS AND NON-STATE ACTORS EQUALLY HAVE CODES OF ETHICS BASED ON SIMILAR VALUES TO GUIDE PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT. I COMMEND THEM AND IMPLORE THOSE THAT DO NOT HAVE SUCH CODES TO DEVELOP AND INSTITUTIONALISE THEM. THIS IS PROGRESSIVE AND GOOD FOR THE NATION.

21. AS THE SAYING GOES "CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME". THEREFORE, THE APPLICATION OF PRINCIPLES OF MORALS AND ETHICS MUST BE INCULCATED IN OUR DAILY LIVES STARTING WITH OURSELVES AS POLITICIANS, WHO IN THE RECENT PAST HAVED DEMONSTRATED HIGH LEVELS OF INTOLERANCE AND DISRESPECT FOR ONE ANOTHER AND IN SOME CASES TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC, INCLUDING THE MEDIA. AS A RESULT, THIS HAS TRICKLED DOWN TO OUR YOUTHS AND CADRES WHO ARE EMULATING BAD LEADERSHIP EXAMPLES.

*WE MUST STOP THIS MORAL DECAY;
WE MUST ENHANCE BROTHERLINESS;
WE MUST RESPECT HUMANITY AGAINST ALL ODDS.*

MR. SPEAKER,

22. LET ME ALSO URGE ALL PARENTS, TEACHERS AND RELIGIOUS LEADERS TO TAKE A LEAD IN INCULCATING HIGH STANDARDS OF MORALS AND ETHICAL VALUES IN OUR PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY THE YOUNG, STARTING FROM OUR FAMILIES, COMMUNITIES, SCHOOLS AND PLACES OF WORSHIP.

23. PARENTS, TEACHERS AND RELIGIOUS LEADERS HAVE BEEN SINGLED OUT BECAUSE OF THEIR ROLE IN THE DAILY LIVES OF OUR CHILDREN AND YOUTHS. IF OUR CHILDREN ARE NOT AT HOME, THEY MUST BE IN SCHOOL OR AT LEAST AT CHURCH. UNFORTUNATELY, WHAT PREVAILS IN OUR SOCIETY IS THAT OUR CHILDREN PATRONISE SOCIAL PLACES SUCH AS BARS AND CINEMAS, WHICH DON'T INSTILL GOOD MORAL VALUES. THEY SOMETIMES SPEND TIME INDULGING IN UNDER AGE DRINKING AND WATCHING PORNOGRAPHIC MOVIES ON SOCIAL MEDIA, WHICH ARE BOTH PROHIBITED BY THE ZAMBIAN LAWS.
24. IT IS THEREFORE IMPERATIVE TO PLAY AN ACTIVE ROLE IN NURTURING AND MONITORING THE ACTIVITIES OF OUR YOUTHS AND CHILDREN.

MR. SPEAKER,

25. EQUALLY WORRYING IS THE SALE OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES IN BUS STATIONS, MARKETS AND OTHER PUBLIC PLACES, WHICH IS LEADING TO AN INCREASED NUMBER OF ACCIDENTS ON OUR ROADS AND PLACES OF WORK AND OFTENTIMES UNNECESSARY LOSS OF INNOCENT LIVES.

THE ABUSE OF ALCOHOL DOES EXACERBATE GENDER BASED VIOLENCE, DEFILEMENT AND TRANSMISSION OF DISEASES IN OUR COMMUNITIES, INCLUDING THE SPREAD OF HIV AND AIDS.

26. IN ORDER TO CURB AND CONTROL THESE VICES, I AM DIRECTING THE MINISTRIES RESPONSIBLE FOR NATIONAL GUIDANCE AND RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS, HEALTH, EDUCATION, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL WELFARE, TOURISM AND ARTS, LOCAL GOVERNMENT, AND COMMERCE TO COORDINATE THEIR ACTIONS AND ENSURE EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF THE PRODUCTION AND SALE OF ALCOHOL.

PATRIOTISM AND NATIONAL UNITY

MR. SPEAKER,

27. PATRIOTISM AND NATIONAL UNITY SHOULD SPEAK TO THE HEART AND SOUL OF EVERY ZAMBIAN IN OUR QUEST TO SUSTAIN OUR SOVEREIGNTY AND BUILD A BETTER COUNTRY FOR OURSELVES AND FUTURE GENERATIONS. PATRIOTISM INVOKES AN EMOTIONAL ATTACHMENT TO ONE'S COUNTRY.

THIS ATTACHMENT IS NOT ONLY BASED ON A SENSE OF BELONGING AND NATIONAL PRIDE, BUT ALSO A READINESS TO SACRIFICE FOR THE COUNTRY. WE NEED TO BUILD A CULTURE, WHICH PUTS ZAMBIA FIRST IN ALL WE DO.

MR. SPEAKER,

28. EVERY ZAMBIAN SHOULD IDENTIFY THEMSELVES WITH THE NATIONAL EMBLEMS THAT REPRESENT OUR SOVERNITY AND NATIONAL IDENTITY.

- i. OUR NATIONAL ANTHEM;
- ii. OUR COAT OF ARMS; AND
- iii. OUR NATIONAL FLAG.

29. I HAVE OBSERVED WITH DISMAY, THAT THESE NATIONAL EMBLEMS ARE NOT CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD BY MANY ZAMBIANS, TO THE EXTENT THAT MANY FAIL TO EVEN SING THE FULL AND CORRECT WORDS OF THE NATIONAL ANTHEM. THEIR INTERPRETATION AND UNDERSTANDING OF OUR COAT OF ARMS AND THE NATIONAL FLAG IS EVEN WORSE. A TALL ORDER INDEED!

30. FURTHERMORE, IT SADDENS ME TO SEE MANY ZAMBIANS WHO ARE UNABLE TO IDENTIFY AND INTERPRET NATIONAL MONUMENTS WHICH EXPRESS OUR RICH NATIONAL HERITAGE SUCH AS:

- i. THE FREEDOM STATUE;
- ii. THE VICTORIA FALLS;
- iii. CHILENJE HOUSE 394 (FIRST PRESIDENT, DR. KAUNDA'S HOUSE);
- iv. THE FALLEN FOOTBALLERS BURIAL SITE;
- v. THE PRESIDENTIAL BURIAL SITE;
- vi. DAG HAMMARSKJOLD MEMORIAL;
- vii. N'GOMBE ILEDE.

MR. SPEAKER,

31. WE MUST THEREFORE ENDEAVOUR TO SHOW OUR PATRIOTISM TO THIS GREAT NATION BY TAKING DELIBERATE ACTIONS TO UNDERSTAND AND INTERPRET WHAT THESE NATIONAL SYMBOLS AND MONUMENTS REPRESENT.

MR. SPEAKER,

32. LET US ALSO MAINTAIN AND DEFEND THE RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS OF OUR PEOPLE. LET US TAKE A LEAF FROM OUR FOUNDING FATHERS AND MOTHERS WHO FOUGHT SELFLESSLY TO ATTAIN OUR INDEPENDENCE, GIVING US THE FREEDOMS AND RIGHTS WE ENJOY TODAY. THEY DID THIS WITH A DEEP SENSE OF SACRIFICE AND LOVE FOR THE COUNTRY

33. IT IS, THEREFORE, MY FIRM BELIEF THAT AS ZAMBIANS, WE MUST BE DRIVEN BY LOYALTY, PATRIOTISM AND PROMOTION OF WELL-BEING OF OUR COUNTRY.

MR. SPEAKER,

34. THE STATE OF PATRIOTISM AMONG ZAMBIANS TODAY IS VARIED. WE HAVE SOME ZAMBIANS WHO HAVE A HIGH SENSE OF PATRIOTISM WHILE IT IS LACKING IN OTHERS. THIS IS EVIDENCED BY SOME PEOPLE'S PREFERENCE FOR FOREIGN GOODS AND SERVICES TO ZAMBIAN PRODUCTS. LET ME URGE FELLOW ZAMBIANS TO BE PATRIOTIC AND AT ALL TIMES PUT HIGH PREFERENCE TO BUY ZAMBIAN GOODS AND SERVICES.

FURTHER, LET ME URGE THE LOCAL MANUFACTURERS TO CONTINUOUSLY IMPROVE THE QUALITY AND PRESENTATION OF THEIR PRODUCTS IN ORDER TO INSTILL CUSTOMER CONFIDENCE IN OUR LOCAL PRODUCTS.

MR. SPEAKER,

36. THE RECENT HAPPENINGS, WHERE ZAMBIANS ARE CONNIVING WITH FOREIGNERS TO ILLEGALLY HARVEST OUR NATURAL RESOURCES SUCH AS THE MUKULA TREE AND WILDLIFE IS ANOTHER ILLUSTRATION OF OUR LACK OF PATRIOTISM.
37. EVEN WORSE, IS THE PHENOMENON OF FALSE ACCOUNTING, BY UNDERVALUING THE PRICES OF GOODS AND SERVICES, WHICH IS SOMETIMES PERPETRATED BY ZAMBIANS ON BEHALF OF FOREIGN-OWNED COMPANIES, WHICH IS HAEMORRHAGING THE COUNTRY MILLIONS OF DOLLARS.
38. BY THE SAME TOKEN THOSE ZAMBIANS WHO OVER-PRICE GOODS AND SERVICES COMING INTO OUR COUNTRY ARE NO BETTER.

39. IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN OUR PATRIOTISM, I WISH TO REMIND ZAMBIANS THAT WHENEVER WE RECEIVE FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND GOODWILL FROM OUR DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS, WE MUST ALWAYS ENSURE THAT WE PRONOUNCE AND MAKE REFERENCE TO SUCH SUPPORT IN OUR LOCAL CURRENCY, **THE KWACHA**.
40. THE ULTIMATE LOSS OF OUR RESOURCES AND THE ACCOMPANYING REVENUE TO GOVERNMENT AS A RESULT OF THESE UNSCRUPULOUS DEALINGS HAVE A LONG TERM NEGATIVE EFFECT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR COUNTRY.

MR SPEAKER,

41. I AM EQUALLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE ILLEGAL MANNER IN WHICH LAND IS BEING SOLD TO FOREIGNERS. AT THE RATE WE ARE SELLING OUR LAND TO FOREIGNERS, THERE IS VERITABLE DANGER THAT WE MIGHT RENDER OUR CHILDREN LANDLESS. THE INDISCRIMATE SALE OF LAND HAS AN ULTIMATE EFFECT ON OUR CHILDREN WHO MAY END UP AS SQUATTERS IN THEIR OWN COUNTRY.
42. IT IS SADDENING THAT LAND IS SOMETIMES SOLD SO CHEAPLY THAT THE VALUE AT WHICH IT IS BEING GIVEN OUT COULD BE AS LOW AS CHEAP HANDOUTS.

WE THEREFORE, AS A MATTER OF URGENCY, NEED TO COME UP WITH A REVISED LAND ACT AND POLICY THAT GUARANTEES SOVEREIGNTY OVER OUR LAND WHICH IS A KEY NATURAL HERITAGE.

43. I AM THEREFORE DIRECTING THE MINISTER OF LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO BRING TO CABINET A REVISED LANDS ACT AND LAND POLICY, WHICH WILL ENSURE THAT OUR LAND IS PROTECTED FOR OUR FUTURE GENERATIONS.
44. THIS LACK OF PATRIOTISM WITH REGARD TO LAND MANAGEMENT, SHAMES THE SELFLESS SPIRIT OF OUR FOREFATHERS AND MOTHERS WHO FOUGHT AND DIED SO THAT WE COULD BE TRULY AN INDEPENDENT AND SOVEREIGN STATE. IT IS OUR DUTY TO HONOUR THEIR SERVICE TO THIS COUNTRY BY PUTTING OUR COUNTRY FIRST IN ALL THAT WE DO.
45. WE ALSO AS POLITICAL PLAYERS, NEED TO SERIOUSLY REVIEW THE UNBECOMING BEHAVIOUR OF OUR PARTY MEMBERS ESPECIALLY THE SO CALLED CADRES AND BRING TO AN END, THE USURPING OF POWERS VESTED IN RELEVANT AUTHORITIES BY WAY OF GRABBING LAND AND ALLOCATING THEMSELVES PIECES OF LAND AS IF THEY WERE THE LAW UNTO THEMSELVES.

46. SIMILARLY, WE NEED TO BRING SANITY INTO OUR LOCAL AUTHORITIES WHO GIVE AWAY LAND SOMETIMES AND SADLY SO IN OUR LOCAL HERITAGE SITES, ECOSYSTEM ENCLAVES, TO AN EXTENT THAT NATURAL HABITATS FOR OUR INDEGINOUS SPIECES GET DISTURBED. IT MAY ALSO NOT BE STRANGE TO DISCOVER THAT LAND WHICH HAS DEPOSITS OF NATURAL MINIERALS IS GIVEN OUT TO CATER FOR INDIVIDUAL INTERESTS.
47. THIS CONCERN CAN BE EXTENDED TO SOME OF OUR TRADITIONAL LEADERS WHO HAVE GIVEN AWAY LAND TO INVESTORS WITH IMPUNITY IN SOME CASES DISREGARDING ALL OTHER CONSIDERATIONS SUCH AS EXISTING SETTLEMENTS, COMMON GRAZING AREAS, BURIAL SITES, AND ACCESS TO WATER FOR COMMUNITIES.
48. LET ME SOUND A STERN WARNING THAT MY GOVERNMENT WILL NOT SIT IDOL WHILE THIS UNBECOMING, UNPATRIOTIC BEHAVIOUR CONTINUES.
49. WHERE INDIVIDUAL INTERESTS OUTWEIGH NATIONAL INTERESTS, GOVERNMENT WILL NOT HESITATE TO REPOSESS OR RE-ENTER ANY SUCH PIECES OF LAND OR SITES.

50. IT IS AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND THAT I DIRECTED THE MINISTRY OF NATIONAL PLANNING TO ENSURE THAT THE 7TH NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND OTHER FUTURE PLANS COMPREHENSIVELY CONTAIN CLEAR OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES CONNECTED TO OUR NATIONAL LAND USE PLAN.

NATIONAL UNITY

MR. SPEAKER,

51. LET ME NOW TURN TO THE ISSUE OF NATIONAL UNITY.

WE ARE ALL ALIVE TO THE FACT THAT ZAMBIA IS MADE UP OF 73 ETHNIC GROUPINGS. THIS IS A FACT THAT WE CANNOT HIDE, CHANGE OR IGNORE. NATIONAL UNITY IS AN ESSENTIAL PRE-REQUISITE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR NATION. DESPITE OUR DIVERGENT ETHNIC, SOCIAL, RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL BACKGROUNDS, WE HAVE A SHARED HERITAGE AND DESTINY AS A COUNTRY, WHICH OBLIGE US TO CO-EXIST IN UNITY.

MR. SPEAKER,

52. OUR NATIONAL UNITY WAS PUT TO THE TEST BY THE EVENTS THAT CHARACTERISED THE AUGUST 11, 2016 ELECTIONS, WHERE PEOPLE OF DIFFERENT POLITICAL PERSUASIONS WERE PITTED ONE AGAINST THE OTHER. THIS BEHAVIOR IS SURELY UNZAMBIAN AND SHOULD NEVER HAPPEN IN A CHRISTIAN NATION SUCH AS OURS. IT IS IN THIS REGARD THAT I APPOINTED A COMMISSION OF INQUIRY ON VOTING PATTERNS AND ELECTORAL VIOLENCE TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS THAT WILL PREVENT THE RECURRENCE OF SUCH VIOLENCE IN FUTURE ELECTIONS.
53. AS ZAMBIANS, WE MUST, THEREFORE, TAKE DELIBERATE STEPS TO WORK TOGETHER TO AMICABLY SOLVE PRESSING ISSUES FOR THE SAKE OF NATIONAL UNITY, STABILITY AND PROSPERITY. WE SHOULD ALWAYS BE READY TO PUT ASIDE OUR ETHNIC AND POLITICAL DIFFERENCES FOR THE GOOD OF OUR NATION IN LINE WITH OUR MOTTO OF **“ONE ZAMBIA ONE NATION.”** AS PATRIOTS, ZAMBIA MUST ALWAYS COME FIRST IN OUR DECISIONS AND ACTIONS.

MR. SPEAKER,

54. AS MEMBERS OF THE GLOBAL VILLAGE, WE ACKNOWLEDGE THE NEED TO BE PART OF THE GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT AGENDA BUT WE ARE COGNISANT OF THE FACT THAT THE INTERESTS OF OUR COUNTRY ARE PRIMARY AND FUNDAMENTAL TO ANY OF OUR ENGAGEMENTS ABROAD.

55. IN PROMOTING INTER-DEPENDENCY AMONG COUNTRIES GOVERNMENT SHALL ENSURE THAT OUR GLOBAL AND REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS BENEFIT OUR PEOPLE BY WAY OF CONTRIBUTING TOWARDS POVERTY REDUCTION, WEALTH AND EMPLOYMENT CREATION.

THIS IS IN LINE WITH OUR POLICY OF PROMOTING ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY WHICH WE SHALL VIGOROUSLY PURSUE.

DEMOCRACY AND CONSTITUTIONALISM

MR. SPEAKER,

56. OUR REPUBLICAN CONSTITUTION CLEARLY DECLARES THAT ZAMBIA IS A SOVEREIGN, UNITARY, MULTI-PARTY DEMOCRATIC STATE. ZAMBIA'S DEMOCRACY IS STILL IN ITS INFANCY AND WE THEREFORE MUST NURTURE IT. WITHIN A SPACE OF OVER FIFTY YEARS, WE HAVE LIVED THROUGH BOTH THE ONE-PARTY AND MULTI-PARTY SYSTEMS OF GOVERNMENT. WE HAVE CONSCIOUSLY CHOSEN MULTI-PARTISM AS OUR PREFERRED FORM OF GOVERNMENT BECAUSE WE COLLECTIVELY BELIEVE IN THE INHERENT POWER OF FREEDOM AND CHOICE EMBEDDED IN THE VALUES OF PLURALISM.

57. AS A DEMOCRATIC SOVEREIGN STATE, IT IS EXPECTED THAT WE SHALL GOVERN OURSELVES IN ACCORDANCE WITH OUR FIRM AND WELL-FOUNDED DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES OF:

- i. CHOOSING GOVERNMENT THROUGH PERIODIC FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS;
- ii. ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF THE PEOPLE IN THE POLITICAL AND CIVIC LIFE OF THE NATION;
- iii. PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS;
AND

- iv. APPLICATION OF THE RULE OF LAW AND EQUALITY OF ALL BEFORE THE LAW.

MR. SPEAKER,

58. GOVERNMENT REMAINS COMMITTED AND RESOLVED TO PROMOTING AND UPHOLDING DEMOCRACY. IN THIS REGARD, WE HAVE CONTINUED TO HOLD FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS. WHERE CHANGE HAS HAPPENED, THERE HAS ALWAYS BEEN A SMOOTH TRANSFER OF POWER FROM ONE ADMINISTRATION TO ANOTHER. THIS IS A CLEAR DEMONSTRATION OF OUR COMMITMENT TO AND RESPECT FOR DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES OF EMPOWERING AND ENCOURAGING THE ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF OUR PEOPLE AT ALL LEVELS IN THE GOVERNANCE SYSTEM OF OUR COUNTRY.

MR. SPEAKER,

59. DESPITE THESE ACHIEVEMENTS, THERE IS STILL ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT TO ENHANCE OUR DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES. WE NEED TO ADDRESS ALL THE LACUNAS IN OUR CONSTITUTION. WE ALSO NEED TO PAY ATTENTION TO THE HIGH LEVELS OF APATHY DURING ELECTIONS AS WELL AS NEGATIVE TRENDS SUCH AS REGIONAL VOTING AND DECISIVELY TACKLE THE USE OF VIOLENCE IN ELECTIONS.

MR SPEAKER,

60. IT IS, THEREFORE, OUR INESCAPABLE DUTY AS CITIZENS TO ACTIVELY PROMOTE DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES IN OUR GOVERNANCE SYSTEM.

TOGETHER, WE NEED TO UPHOLD AND PROMOTE OUR DEMOCRATIC CULTURE;

TOGETHER, WE NEED TO ENSURE THAT THERE IS ALWAYS A PEACEFUL, SECURE AND STABLE ENVIRONMENT FOR OUR FLEDGING DEMOCRACY.

TOGETHER, WE SHOULD GO BEYOND ANY POLITICAL DIVIDE AND WORK AS ONE PEOPLE. THAT IS BOTH OUR DUTY AND RESPONSIBILITY WE OWE TO OUR NATION!

GOOD GOVERNANCE AND INTEGRITY

MR. SPEAKER,

61. GOOD GOVERNANCE ENCOMPASSES RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, THE RULE OF LAW, TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION OF CITIZENS IN NATIONAL AFFAIRS.

FURTHER, GOOD GOVERNANCE DEMANDS INDEPENDENCE OF THE THREE ARMS OF GOVERNMENT, THAT IS THE EXECUTIVE, THE LEGISLATURE AND THE JUDICIARY.

62. AS A COUNTRY, WE ARE PROUD TO SAY WE HAVE A FAIRLY STABLE AND PREDICTABLE GOVERNANCE SYSTEM. OUR JUDICIARY EXERCISES ITS FUNCTIONS INDEPENDENTLY, WITHOUT UNDUE INFLUENCE; WHILE OUR LEGISLATURE IS ONE OF THE MOST VIBRANT WITH EFFECTIVE CHECKS AND BALANCES ON THE EXECUTIVE AND THE ENTIRE GOVERNANCE SYSTEM. IT IS TRULY THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE, WHICH EFFECTIVELY EXERCISES ITS OVERSIGHT ROLE ON THE EXECUTIVE THROUGH THIS AUGUST HOUSE.
63. FURTHERMORE, WE HAVE WELL-FUNCTIONING INSTITUTIONS OFFERING CHECKS AND BALANCES SUCH AS THE OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR- GENERAL, THE OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC PROTECTOR, THE ANTI-CORRUPTION COMMISSION AND THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION. THESE INSTITUTIONS ARE STILL BEING STRENGTHENED TO HELP THEM COPE WITH THE EVER-CHANGING AND DYNAMIC SYSTEMS OF GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY.

64. GOVERNMENT HAS PUT IN PLACE AN E-GOVERNMENT SYSTEM AS PART OF ITS SMART ZAMBIA AGENDA TO ENTRENCH TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS.

MR. SPEAKER,

65. AS A COMMITMENT TO GOOD GOVERNANCE, GOVERNMENT HAS PLACED A HIGH PREMIUM ON CONSTITUTIONALISM. IN THIS REGARD, WE NOW HAVE THE CONSTITUTIONAL COURT, THE COURT OF APPEAL AND SPECIALISED COURTS OF THE HIGH COURT TO ENHANCE CITIZENS' ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND EXPEDITIOUS DISPOSAL OF CASES.

66. WE ARE ALIVE TO THE FACT THAT JUSTICE DELAYED IS JUSTICE DENIED. GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO RESPECT THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE JUDICIARY. GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO UPHOLD THE RULE OF LAW IN ORDER TO STRENGTHEN INSTITUTIONS OF GOVERNANCE.

MR. SPEAKER,

67. GOOD GOVERNANCE FLOURISHES BEST WHERE THERE ARE HIGH LEVELS OF INTEGRITY. INTEGRITY DEMANDS THAT ONE IS HONEST, RELIABLE AND BEYOND REPROACH IN THE DISCHARGE OF ONE'S DUTY AND EVEN IN PERSONAL CONDUCT.

68. THIS, FOR INSTANCE, ENTAILS THAT A POLICE OFFICER AT A CHECK POINT WILL ASSESS THE ROAD-WORTHINESS OF VEHICLES WITHOUT HAVING A BRIBE IN MIND. IT ALSO ENTAILS THAT A HEALTH WORKER AT A HOSPITAL WILL TREAT ALL PATIENTS WITH DIGNITY REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THEY ARE IN THE HIGH OR LOW COST WARD AND; THAT A CUSTOMS OFFICER WILL COLLECT WHAT IS DUE TO THE TREASURY WITHOUT COMPROMISE.

THE SAME IS DEMANDED OF THE HUMAN RESOURCE OFFICER WHO IS EXPECTED TO RECRUIT ON MERIT AND NOT TO BE INFLUENCED BY TRIBE OR ANY OTHER NEGATIVE CONSIDERATIONS.

69. IN THIS REGARD, MORE IS EVEN DEMANDED OF US IN LEADERSHIP, BE IT AT COMMUNITY, DISTRICT, PROVINCIAL OR NATIONAL LEVEL. WITH INTEGRITY, LEADERSHIP BECOMES RELIABLE IN THE EYES OF THOSE BEING LED WHICH IN TURN ENHANCES TRUST AND STABILITY.

MR SPEAKER,

70. DECENTRALISATION OF FUNCTIONS WITH MATCHING RESOURCES IS A KEY ELEMENT OF GOOD GOVERNANCE. DECENTRALISATION REQUIRES GIVING POWER TO THE PEOPLE AND BRINGING THE GOVERNMENT CLOSER TO THEM. THIS IS WHAT OUR NATIONAL DECENTRALISATION POLICY IS DESIGNED TO ACHIEVE.

71. IN THIS REGARD, GOVERNMENT IS NOW MORE DETERMINED THAN EVER BEFORE TO IMPLEMENT DECENTRALISATION BY DEVOLUTION WHILE UPHOLDING THE PRINCIPLES OF FISCAL DECENTRALISATION IN LINE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF OUR CONSTITUTION.

AS CITIZENS, WE ARE ALL EXPECTED TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS POLICY AS IT GUARANTEES A FUTURE OF EQUITABLY SHARED PROSPERITY.

MR. SPEAKER,

72. THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION IN ALL ITS FORMS IS KEY TO PROMOTING GOOD GOVERNANCE AND INTEGRITY. CORRUPTION AND OTHER RELATED CRIMES SUCH AS BRIBERY, MONEY LAUNDERING AND DRUG TRAFFICKING DEPRIVE ZAMBIA OF HER RESOURCES AND THE MUCH NEEDED DEVELOPMENT. WE SHOULD, THEREFORE, ALL RECOMMIT OURSELVES TO THIS FIGHT AND ENSURE THAT WE WORK TOWARDS ATTAINING A CORRUPT FREE SOCIETY.

73. GOVERNMENT WILL REMAIN RESOLUTE IN FIGHTING THIS SCURGE AND COMBAT IT.

- i. GOVERNMENT IS NON-SELECTIVE IN THIS FIGHT.
- ii. GOVERNMENT DEMANDS INTEGRITY FROM ALL PUBLIC OFFICES AND OFFICE HOLDERS.
- iii. GOVERNMENT FURTHER DEMANDS THAT THE GENERAL PUBLIC DESISTS FROM ENCOURAGING THESE VICES.

MR SPEAKER,

74. GOOD AND EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP IS INDISPENSABLE TO THE PROMOTION OF GOOD GOVERNANCE AND INTEGRITY. A MAJOR REQUIREMENT OF SUCH LEADERSHIP IS TO BE

APPROACHABLE, OPEN TO NEW IDEAS, AND ACCOUNTABLE TO THE CITIZENRY.

75. LEADERS MUST NOT INSTILL FEAR BUT RATHER INSPIRE FREE DEBATE AND CONSENSUS BUILDING. WE, THEREFORE, NEED TO DEVELOP AND NURTURE A CULTURE WHERE THOSE IN AUTHORITY ARE NOT ONLY ACCOUNTABLE BUT ALSO LISTEN TO THE VOICES OF THE PEOPLE THAT THEY LEAD. THIS IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 90 OF THE CONSTITUTION WHICH DEMANDS THAT EXECUTIVE AUTHORITY SHOULD BE EXERCISED IN A MANNER COMPATIBLE WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND FOR THE PEOPLE'S WELL-BEING AND BENEFIT. AS A COUNTRY, WE SHOULD COMMIT OURSELVES TO THE HIGHEST STANDARDS OF TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY.

HUMAN DIGNITY, EQUALITY, EQUITY, SOCIAL JUSTICE AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

MR. SPEAKER,

76. HUMAN DIGNITY, EQUALITY, EQUITY, SOCIAL JUSTICE AND NON-DISCRIMINATION ARE CARDINAL TO CREATING AN INCLUSIVE SOCIETY.

NO SOCIETY CAN TRULY ACHIEVE SOCIAL COHESION, UNITY OF PURPOSE AND MEANINGFUL PROGRESS IN THE ABSENCE OF THESE VALUES.

77. HUMAN DIGNITY IS THE MOST IMPORTANT HUMAN RIGHT FROM WHICH ALL OTHER FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS DERIVE. IT IS INHERENT IN EVERY HUMAN BEING AND IS INALIENABLE. HUMAN DIGNITY IS PREMISED ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT EVERY HUMAN BEING IS CREATED IN THE IMAGE AND LIKENESS OF GOD AND THEREFORE, DESERVES TO BE LOVED, VALUED AND RESPECTED, REGARDLESS OF SOCIAL STANDING.

MR SPEAKER,

78. IN OUR COUNTRY TODAY, HUMAN DIGNITY IS BEING VIOLATED IN MULTIPLE WAYS. OUR PEOPLE HAVE, AND CONTINUE TO SUFFER HUMILIATION THROUGH ACTS THAT DIMINISH THEIR SELF-WORTH.

79. WE STILL HAVE FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES THAT DESPISE AND DISCRIMINATE AGAINST PEOPLE LIVING WITH DISABILITIES TO THE POINT OF MAKING THEM FEEL LESS HUMAN.

80. WE HAVE SEEN CHILDREN BEING ABUSED BY ADULTS WHO ARE EXPECTED TO BE THEIR PROTECTORS.

FAMILIES ARE NOW MARRYING OFF THEIR GIRL CHILDREN AT A TENDER AGE WITHOUT CONSIDERATION OF THE NEED FOR THEM TO HELP THE YOUNG PEOPLE TO REALISE THE DREAMS OF A FUTURE THEY ASPIRE TO.

81. WE NOW SEE AN ABOMINATION WHERE, SPOUSES ARE BRUTALLY MURDERING EACH OTHER. WE ARE ALSO EXPERIENCING PEOPLE BEING MURDERED FOR THE SOLE PURPOSE OF SACRIFICING THEIR BODY PARTS FOR RITUALS THAT ARE BOTH MORALLY AND CRIMINALLY REPREHENSIBLE.

82. IT IS SADDENING TO OBSERVE HOW IN OUR COMMUNITIES, CHILDREN, IN SOME CASES AS YOUNG AS SIX MONTHS, ARE BEING DEFILED AS A RESULT OF MISGUIDED CULTURAL BELIEFS AND PRACTICES THAT SEXUAL INTERCOURSE WITH CHILDREN CURES AIDS. THIS SHAMEFUL PRACTICE HAS NOT ONLY LED TO AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF CASES OF DEFILEMENTS, BUT HAS ALSO ESCALATED THE SPREAD OF HIV AND AIDS.

MR SPEAKER,

83. THESE VICES ARE UNACCEPTABLE AND TOTALLY INHUMAN. IN THIS REGARD GOVERNMENT WILL NOT SIT IDLE BY AND WATCH PEPERTRATORS GET AWAY WITH THEIR EVIL ACTS. GOVERNMENT HAS PUT IN PLACE A NUMBER OF INTERVENTIONS TO ADDRESS FACTORS IMPACTING NEGATIVELY ON THE DIGNITY OF OUR PEOPLE. GOVERNEMENT IS WORKING WITH FAITH-BASED ORGANISATIONS AND OUR TRADITIONAL LEADERS TO REVERSE THE SCOURGE OF EARLY PREGNANCIES AND CHILD MARRIAGES INCLUDING TACKLING THE PROBLEM OF RITUAL KILLINGS IN SOME OF COMMUNITIES.

84. WE FURTHER REINFORCE THESE INTERVENTIONS BY SECURING THE WELFARE OF RETIREES, PROMOTION OF THE SOCIAL CASH TRANSFER PROGRAMME, THE FARMER INPUT SUPPORT PROGRAMME AND THE FOOD SECURITY PACK. OTHERS ARE THE PUBLIC WELFARE ASSISTANCE SCHEME, ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMMES AND THE SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMMES. FURTHER, GOVERNMENT WILL STRENGTHEN EFFORTS TO REMOVE STREET CHILDREN AND RE-INTEGRATE THEM INTO COMMUNITIES AND FAMILIES.

MR. SPEAKER,

85. RECOGNISING THAT HUMAN DIGNITY IS ALSO BEING ERODED IN WORK PLACES, MY GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO IMPLEMENT DECENT WORK PROGRAMMES AIMED AT ENDING CASUALISATION, DEVELOP SOCIAL HEALTH INSURANCE SCHEMES AS WELL AS IMPROVE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT, SO THAT OUR PEOPLE ACCESS PRODUCTIVE JOBS.

86. GOVERNMENT IS EQUALLY CONCERNED ABOUT INCREASING NUMBERS OF RACIAL ABUSE AT PLACES OF WORK, AND THIS WILL NOT BE CONDONED. THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECENT WORK PROGRAMME, DESIGNED TO ENHANCE THE DIGNITY OF OUR PEOPLE, WE INTEND TO RESTORE HOPE AND DIGNITY OF THE WORKFORCE IN ZAMBIA.

87. AS CITIZENS, WE MUST ALSO DO OUR PART IN TAKING CARE OF OUR LESS PRIVILEGED FAMILY MEMBERS AND THOSE IN NEED WITHIN OUR COMMUNITIES.

LET US REVERT TO THE EXTENDED FAMILY VALUES OF OLDEN DAYS WHERE NO ORPHAN WAS MISTREATED OR ABANDONED AND NO WIDOW WAS DEPRIVED OF FAMILY SUPPORT BE IT SPIRITUAL, MORAL OR MATERIAL.

MR. SPEAKER,

88. THE PRINCIPLE OF EQUITY IS PREMISED ON THE NEED FOR CITIZENS TO CONTRIBUTE ACCORDING TO THEIR ABILITY AND TO ACCESS SERVICES AND OPPORTUNITIES ACCORDING TO THEIR NEEDS. OUR GOVERNMENT COLLECTS TAXES ACCORDING TO THE LEVELS OF INCOME AND HAS THE DUTY TO ENSURE EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT.
89. THIS ENTAILS THAT PARTS OF OUR COUNTRY THAT ARE LESS DEVELOPED WILL BE GIVEN MORE ATTENTION. IN THE SAME VEIN, VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES WILL ALSO BE GIVEN MORE ATTENTION BY BOTH GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY IN OUR QUEST TO ATTAIN INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT THAT LEAVES NO ONE BEHIND. IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT ONE OF THE KEY DEVELOPMENT PILLARS CONTAINED IN THE 7TH NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN ADDRESSES THE NEED FOR GOVERNMENT TO AGGRESSIVELY REDUCE DEVELOPMENT INEQUALITIES.

MR SPEAKER,

90. ACCORDING TO THE CENTRAL STATISTICAL OFFICE, POVERTY LEVELS IN OUR COUNTRY REMAIN UNACCEPTABLY HIGH, WITH 54.4% OF OUR PEOPLE LIVING BELOW THE POVERTY LINE, NATIONALLY. THE SITUATION IN THE RURAL AREAS IS EVEN WORSE AT 76.6% COMPARED TO 23.4% IN URBAN AREAS. ADDITIONALLY, INCOME DISPARITY STANDS AT 0.69. THIS MEANS THAT THE GAP BETWEEN THE RICH AND THE POOR REMAINS EXTREMELY HIGH.
91. IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT OUR PRO-POOR POLICIES OF AS CONTAINED IN THE 7TH NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND THE PF MANIFESTO HAVE PRIORITISED INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT IN LEAST DEVELOPED AREAS OF OUR COUNTRY IN ORDER TO LINK THEM UP WITH THE REST OF THE COUNTRY. MY GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO ENSURE THAT NO CHILD FAILS TO ATTAIN EDUCATION IN THE RURAL AREAS FOR LACK OF EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES, OR A YOUNG MOTHER DYING NEEDLESSLY DURING CHILD BIRTH FOR FAILING TO ACCESS A HEALTH FACILITY.

92. REDUCING POVERTY, VULNERABILITY AND INEQUALITIES ARE CENTRAL PILLARS OF THE 7TH NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE PART OF OUR DEVELOPMENTAL AGENDA.

MR SPEAKER,

93. THERE CAN BE NO FREE SOCIETY WHERE ANY OF ITS MEMBERS STANDS UNEQUAL BEFORE THE LAW OR IS DEEMED UNDESERVING WHEN IT COMES TO OPPORTUNITIES AND ACCESSING PUBLIC SERVICES SUCH AS HEALTH, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL PROTECTION, ACCESS TO CLEAN DRINKING WATER, AND GOOD SANITATION. IN OUR CONSTITUTION, THIS FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE IS GUARANTEED TO EVERY PERSON REGARDLESS OF THEIR STATUS.

94. IN OUR QUEST TO PROMOTE THE PRINCIPLE OF EQUALITY, GOVERNMENT HAS MADE COMMENDABLE STRIDES IN BRINGING OUR COURTS AS CLOSE TO THE COMMUNITIES AS POSSIBLE. WE ARE ALSO PROGRESIVELY ADDRESSING GENDER INEQUALITIES IN ALL OUR SOCIO-ECONOMIC DISPENSATION. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE GENDER AND EQUALITY COMMISSION THROUGH ACT NO 22 OF 2015 BEARS TESTIMONY TO THIS EFFORT.

MR. SPEAKER,

95. AS GOVERNMENT, WE ARE WORKING WITH COMMUNITY GROUPS AND COOPERATIVES, WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON WOMEN AND THE YOUTH, TO FIND SUSTAINABLE WAYS OF EMPOWERING THEM IN A BID TO REDUCE POVERTY. WE WELCOME AND ENCOURAGE THE PARTICIPATION OF OTHER STAKEHOLDERS, SUCH AS THE CHURCH AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS IN THIS NOBLE CAUSE.

96. GOVERNMENT IS PROMOTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP, THROUGH IMPLEMENTATION OF MICRO CREDIT PROGRAMMES, SPECIFICALLY TARGETED AT OUR WOMENFOLK AND THE YOUTH FOR WEALTH CREATION AND POVERTY REDUCTION. THESE INCLUDE THE VILLAGE BANKING SCHEMES, THE SAVINGS GROUP PROJECTS AND SAVINGS AND LENDING SCHEMES. THE PROGRAMMES ARE INTENDED TO IMPART SKILLS IN BUSINESS MANAGEMENT, BASIC ACCOUNTING AND MARKETING TO THE BENEFICIARIES.

MR. SPEAKER,

97. DISCRIMINATION IN ANY FORM IS MORALLY REPUGNANT AND WE MUST THEREFORE REJECT IT. IT ROBS OUR PEOPLE OF THEIR HUMAN DIGNITY AND PROMOTES INEQUALITY IN THE DISTRIBUTION OF OUR COLLECTIVE WEALTH. ACCORDINGLY, IT IS OUR CHRISTIAN AND NATIONAL DUTY TO PREVENT AND FIGHT DISCRIMINATION IN ALL ITS MANIFESTATIONS.

98. WE MUST GUARD AGAINST ANY BEHAVIOUR THAT FOSTERS DISCRIMINATION AND PREJUDICE ON THE BASIS OF TRIBE, RACE, GENDER, LANGUAGE, RELIGION, POLITICAL AFFILIATION OR SOCIAL STATUS.

MR. SPEAKER,

99. GOVERNMENT IS CONCERNED WITH THE ISOLATED INCIDENCES WHERE PEOPLE LIVING WITH ALBINISM ARE DELIBERATELY TARGETED DUE TO MISGUIDED CULTURAL BELIEFS. LET ME ALSO HASTEN TO WARN AGAINST XENOPHOBIA, A PHENOMENON WHICH IS ALIEN TO OUR CULTURE.

WE DETEST ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION. ZAMBIANS ARE RENOWNED FOR THEIR HOSPITABLE NATURE AND LOVE FOR PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

MR. SPEAKER,

100. THE PRINCIPLE OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT REQUIRES US TO ACHIEVE OUR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT GOALS WITHOUT COMPROMISING THE ABILITY OF FUTURE GENERATIONS TO MEET THEIR OWN NEEDS. IT IS ANCHORED ON THREE INTERDEPENDENT PILLARS OF:

- i. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,
- ii. SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND,
- iii. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.

101. MY GOVERNMENT IS RESOLVED TO IMPLEMENTING THE 2015 - 2030 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS, WHICH AS A MEMBER OF THE UNITED NATIONS WE ARE PARTY TO. THESE ARE AIMED AT ENDING POVERTY AND HUNGER AND COMBATING INEQUALITIES IN ORDER TO BUILD PEACEFUL, JUST AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES, AMONG MANY OTHER GOALS.

102. THESE GOALS ARE ALSO AIMED AT PROTECTING HUMAN RIGHTS AND PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY AS WELL AS THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN AND GIRLS.

THROUGH THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS, IT IS HOPED THAT WE CAN ATTAIN INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINED ECONOMIC GROWTH, SHARED PROSPERITY AND DECENT WORK FOR ALL AS WELL AS COMBATING THE DRIVERS OF CLIMATE CHANGE.

MR. SPEAKER,

103. POVERTY IN ZAMBIA HAS BEEN AGGRAVATED BY CLIMATE CHANGE. IN THE FACE OF CLIMATE CHANGE, THE OCCURRENCE OF NATURAL DISASTERS SUCH AS DROUGHTS AND FLOODS HAVE BECOME COMMON. THIS HAS BEEN WORSENERD BY THE HIGH RATE OF DEFORESTATION AND LAND DEGRADATION. CLIMATE CHANGE IS IN TURN CONTRIBUTING TO LOW CROP YIELDS, POSING A THREAT TO HOUSEHOLD AND NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY.

104. FURTHERMORE, CLIMATE CHANGE HAS AFFECTED THE GENERATION OF HYDRO-ELECTRICITY DUE TO LOW WATER LEVELS WHICH IN TURN HAS NEGATIVELY AFFECTED PRODUCTIVITY LEVELS, JOB CREATION AND INDEED GOVERNMENT REVENUE. TO REDRESS THIS MY GOVERNMENT HAS PUT IN PLACE A CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY AIMED AT INCREASING OUR CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION INTERVENTIONS IN A MULTI-SECTORAL APPROACH.

MR. SPEAKER

105. TO ADDRESS THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENSURE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, GOVERNMENT HAS PUT IN PLACE INTERVENTIONS SUCH AS AFFORESTATION AND REFORESTATION, PROMOTION OF CONSERVATION FARMING AND DIVERSIFICATION OF AGRICULTURE, INCLUDING THE PROMOTION OF FISH FARMING.

106. OTHER INTERVENTIONS INCLUDE THE DEVELOPMENT OF DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND MANAGEMENT, PROMOTION OF ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF ENERGY LIKE SOLAR, WIND AND NUCLEAR ENERGY.

AT THE MACRO-ECONOMIC LEVEL, WE ARE ALSO CREATING A CLIMATE CHANGE RESILIENT ECONOMY TO INSULATE OUR ECONOMY FROM THESE NATURAL OCCURENCES.

BILL OF RIGHTS

MR SPEAKER,

107. IT IS NOT ENOUGH TO CLAIM TO ENTRENCH THE NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES WITHOUT EXPANDING AND ENFORCING THE BILL OF RIGHTS. THE BILL OF RIGHTS IS THE BEDROCK OF OUR NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES. THIS IS A LIST OF ESSENTIAL RIGHTS AND LIBERTIES THAT ARE ENSHRINED IN THE CONSTITUTION. IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT THE CURRENT BILL OF RIGHTS DOES NOT PROVIDE FOR ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS. AS A RESULT, RIGHTS SUCH AS THE RIGHT TO DECENT ACCOMMODATION, ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER, SANITATION AND HEALTH CARE ARE NOT JUSTICIABLE.

MR SPEAKER,

108. UNDER THE CURRENT BILL OF RIGHTS, IN HARD TO REACH AREAS SUCH AS IMUSHO, KAPUTA, VUBWI OR DUNDUMWEZI, WHICH HAVE NO ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION.

PEOPLE CANNOT LEGALLY TAKE GOVERNMENT TO TASK FOR FAILURE TO PROVIDE THESE SERVICES. EQUALLY MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY WHO ARE UNABLE TO ACCESS EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES CANNOT SEEK LEGAL REDRESS.

109. WITH AN EXPANDED BILL OF RIGHTS, CITIZENS SHALL HAVE THE POWER TO MAKE GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABLE. IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT, GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO ENGAGE IN DIALOGUE OVER THE ISSUE OF THE ENHANCED BILL OF RIGHTS.

110. THE DEMAND BY SOME SECTIONS OF CIVIL SOCIETY THAT A REFERENDUM FOR AN EXPANDED BILL OF RIGHTS BE HELD NOW IS OBVIOUSLY UNTENABLE. WE NEED TO DIALOGUE OVER THIS MATTER ESPECIALLY BEARING IN MIND THAT THE COST AND CONSIDERING THE FACT THAT WE ARE JUST COMING OUT OF TWO VERY COSTLY ELECTIONS WITHIN A SHORT PERIOD OF LESS THAN TWO YEARS.

TRANSFORMATION AGENDA

MR. SPEAKER,

111. THE APPLICATION OF NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES CALLS FOR NATIONAL TRANSFORMATION. TO EXECUTE THIS TRANSFORMATION, WE HAVE TO CHANGE OUR MINDSET BY GETTING RID OF THE ENTRENCHED BEHAVIOURS AND STRUCTURES THAT ARE IN CONFLICT WITH THE DEFINED NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES.

112. THIS TRANSFORMATION IS NOT FOR GOVERNMENT ALONE, IT MUST BE EMBRACED BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS INCLUDING THE CIVIL SOCIETY, THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND ALL CITIZENS. EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP AT ALL LEVELS IS A KEY FACTOR IN ACHIEVING SUCCESSFUL TRANSFORMATION.

MR. SPEAKER,

113. AS WE CONTINUE ON THE JOURNEY OF NATIONAL TRANSFORMATION, THERE WILL, NATURALLY, BE PEOPLE WHO ARE GOING TO RESIST CHANGE. THAT IS EXPECTED. WE HAVE TO REMAIN FIRM, RESOLUTE AND FOCUSED IN PURSUING OUR TRANSFORMATION AGENDA.

THIS IS THE ONLY WAY WE ARE GOING TO REALISE THE FULL APPLICATION OF OUR NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES TO THE BENEFIT OF THE NATION. I WISH TO REAFFIRM THAT MY GOVERNMENT IS FULLY COMMITTED TO THE APPLICATION OF THESE VALUES AND PRINCIPLES. THIS IS A SURE WAY TO STEER OUR NATION TO GREATER HEIGHTS.

MR. SPEAKER,

114. TO ENSURE THAT THE NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES ARE APPRECIATED AND FULLY APPLIED, A LOT OF CIVIC EDUCATION SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN AT ALL LEVELS. GOVERNMENT WILL, THEREFORE, EMBARK ON SENSITISATION PROGRAMMES AIMED AT REACHING EVERY MAN, WOMAN AND CHILD IN ALL CORNERS OF THIS COUNTRY. I CALL UPON ALL RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS TO JOIN GOVERNMENT IN THIS NATIONAL CAUSE. ONCE THE NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES BECOME UNIVERSAL, THEY WILL BE AUTHENTIC PARAMETERS OF OUR BEHAVIOUR.

MR. SPEAKER,

115. FOR US TO MOVE AHEAD AS A NATION WE NEED TO START TO INCULCATE THESE NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES IN OUR CHILDREN FROM A TENDER AGE. THIS WILL ENTAIL INTRODUCING THESE VALUES AND PRINCIPLES IN THE SCHOOL CURRICULA.

COORDINATION MECHANISM

MR. SPEAKER,

116. THE SUCCESSFUL APPLICATION OF THE NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES REQUIRES EFFECTIVE COORDINATION AND LEADERSHIP. TO THIS EFFECT, THE NEWLY CREATED MINISTRY OF RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE WILL SPEARHEAD THIS TASK. THE MINISTRY WILL WORK CLOSELY WITH THE MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING TO CREATE AWARENESS AND REPORT PROGRESS ON NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES.

118. IN THIS REGARD, I DIRECT THE SECRETARY TO CABINET TO DEVELOP A FRAMEWORK TO ASSIST IN GATHERING EVIDENCE IN THE APPLICATION OF NATIONAL VALUES AT NATIONAL, ORGANISATIONAL, COMMUNITY AND INDIVIDUAL LEVELS. THIS SHOULD INCLUDE A FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING THE OPERATIONALISATION OF OUR DECLARATION OF ZAMBIA AS A CHRISTIAN NATION.

MR. SPEAKER,

119. ALL THESE EFFORTS IN ENTRENCHING THE APPLICATION OF THE NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES WILL BE FUTILE IF THERE IS NO SUSTAINED POLITICAL WILL.

120. IT IS THEREFORE, INCUMBENT UPON EACH AND EVERY ZAMBIAN, ESPECIALLY THE POLITICAL LEADERSHIP, TO EMBRACE THE TRANSFORMATION AGENDA ON THE APPLICATION OF NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES.

CONCLUSION,

MR. SPEAKER,

121. WE MUST ALWAYS BEAR IN MIND THAT AS A COUNTRY WE HAVE SET OURSELVES A VISION TO ACHIEVE PROSPERITY FOR ALL ZAMBIANS. FOR THIS TO BE ACHIEVED WE MUST COLLECTIVELY TAKE THE NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES THAT WE HAVE ESPOUSED IN OUR CONSTITUTION VERY SERIOUSLY. WE MUST TAKE THESE VALUES AND PRINCIPLES AS INSTRUCTIVE GUIDELINES THAT DEFINE THE MINIMUM ACCEPTABLE STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR IN OUR DAILY LIVES.

122. IT IS IN THIS REGARD, THAT WE ARE ALL REQUIRED TO REMEMBER THAT WE HAVE INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES TO APPRECIATE AND APPLY, IF WE HAVE TO ATTAIN THE PROSPERITY WE DESIRE.

123. IF WE DO NOT LIVE BY THESE STANDARDS AS INDIVIDUALS, COLLECTIVELY WE WILL HAVE FAILED AS A NATION. OUR JOURNEY TO PROSPERITY MUST BEGIN WITH US EMBRACING OUR NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES.

124. LEST WE FORGET, WE HAVE ONE HISTORY ONE CULTURE AND ONE DESTINY. WE ARE THEREFORE, OBLIGED TO LIVE IN NATIONAL UNITY AND THAT UNITY BEGINS AND ENDS WITH US EMBRACING OUR NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES. LET US PRACTICE THIS IN ALL OUR ENDEAVOURS. IN OUR HOMES, IN OUR SCHOOLS AND IN OUR WORK PLACES.

125. THE GOVERNMENT, THE CHURCH, CIVIL SOCIETY AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS HAVE THE INESCAPABLE DUTY TO TAKE OWNERSHIP OF THIS ENDEAVOUR AND MAKE IT THE REFERENCE POINT OF OUR MORAL RECTITUDE AS A NATION. THIS COUNTRY DESERVES THE VERY BEST!

MR. SPEAKER,

I THANK YOU! GOD BLESS ZAMBIA!