

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON THE OCCASION OF THE RELEASE OF  
THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION TO THE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

**MR. SPEAKER**

WHEN THE PATRIOTIC FRONT FORMED GOVERNMENT IN SEPTEMBER 2011, IT COMMITTED ITSELF TO IMPROVING THE LIVELIHOODS OF THE ZAMBIAN PEOPLE AND ENSURING RESPECT FOR THE RULE OF LAW, THROUGH THE ENHANCEMENT OF THE INSTITUTIONS OF GOVERNANCE, AND THE REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE.

**MR. SPEAKER**

HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT, MR MICHAEL CHILUFYA SATA HAS CONTINUALLY REAFFIRMED THE COMMITMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT TO GIVING THE PEOPLE OF ZAMBIA A CONSTITUTION THAT WILL STAND THE TEST OF TIME. IN ORDER TO ACTUALISE THAT COMMITMENT MADE TO THE ZAMBIAN PEOPLE, HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT ON 16TH NOVEMBER, 2011, APPOINTED A TWENTY MEMBER TECHNICAL COMMITTEE TO PREPARE A DRAFT CONSTITUTION THAT WOULD REFLECT THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE PEOPLE OF ZAMBIA.

WHEN APPOINTING THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE, HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT STRESSED THE NEED FOR THE COMMITTEE TO CONSULT THE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AT ALL PROVINCIAL CENTRES AS WELL AS LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL EXPERTS ON CONSTITUTIONAL LAW AND PRACTICE AND INCORPORATE IN THE NEW NATIONAL CONSTITUTION THE VIEWS OF THE PEOPLE AS RESOLVED IN THE PROVINCIAL CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTIONS.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT ALSO INSTRUCTED THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE TO DRAFT THE NATIONAL CONSTITUTION BASED ON ITS FINDINGS FROM THE REVIEW PROCESS AND BEST INTERNATIONAL CONSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES AND PROVISIONS OF INTERNATIONAL

CONVENTIONS ON HUMAN RIGHTS. THE COMMITTEE WAS ALSO MANDATED TO DRAFT THE CONSTITUTION OF ZAMBIA BILL TO SET THE COMMENCEMENT DATE FOR THE NEW CONSTITUTION, DEAL WITH TRANSITIONAL AND OTHER ISSUES FOR THE EFFECTIVE TRANSITION INTO A NEW CONSTITUTIONAL REGIME TO BE ENACTED BY PARLIAMENT.

**MR. SPEAKER**

FROM THE TIME THE CONSTITUTION MAKING PROCESS COMMENCED, THE GOVERNMENT HAS HELD CONSULTATIONS WITH THE PEOPLE AND VARIOUS STAKEHOLDERS AT DIFFERENT PERIODS OF TIME. THE PURPOSE OF THESE CONSULTATIONS WAS TO ENSURE THAT THE VIEWS OF ALL THE STAKEHOLDERS ARE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN PREPARING THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION. BECAUSE OF THE NEED TO CONSULT WIDELY, THE GOVERNMENT ENDEAVOURED TO ENSURE THAT ENOUGH TIME WAS DEVOTED TO THE CONSULTATIVE PROCESS BEFORE THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION COULD BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC. ALTHOUGH SOME SECTIONS OF SOCIETY EXPRESSED MISGIVINGS REGARDING THE GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO THE PROCESS, THE GOVERNMENT REMAINED STEADFAST AND CONSISTENTLY RE-ITERATED ITS DESIRE AND COMMITMENT TO MOVE THE PROCESS FORWARD.

**MR. SPEAKER**

IT IS THEREFORE BEFITTING THAT AS WE CELEBRATE FIFTY YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE, WE USE THE OPPORTUNITY NOT ONLY FOR REFLECTION BUT TO TAKE ANOTHER BOLD STEP TOWARDS RE-SHAPING THE DESTINY OF OUR NATION FOR THE BETTER, THROUGH THE CONSTITUTION- MAKING PROCESS. A FORTNIGHT AGO THE HON. MINISTER OF JUSTICE, INFORMED THE NATION THAT THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION WOULD BE RELEASED TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC DURING THE JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS. IN KEEPING WITH THAT UNDERTAKING BY THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE IT IS THEREFORE MY HONOUR AND PRIVILEGE ON THIS THE EVE OF OUR GOLDEN JUBILEE

TO OFFICIALLY LAUNCH THE GENERAL PUBLIC CONSULTATIVE PROCESS THROUGH THE RELEASE OF THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION WHICH I SHALL LAY ON THE TABLE. HONOURABLE MEMBERS MAY COLLECT THEIR COPIES OF THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION FROM THE OFFICE OF THE CLERK. THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE WILL ISSUE AN ANNOUNCEMENT AS TO HOW COPIES WILL BE DISTRIBUTED TO MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC. PERMIT ME MR. SPEAKER ON BEHALF OF GOVERNMENT TO EXPRESS OUR SINCERE GRATITUDE TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY THROUGH THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR THEIR GENEROUS SUPPORT TOWARDS THE PRINTING OF THE FINAL DRAFT CONSTITUTION.

**MR. SPEAKER**

IT IS ONLY BEFITTING THAT THIS DOCUMENT IS RELEASED TO THIS AUGUST HOUSE OF ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PEOPLE AND THROUGH THIS HOUSE TO THE MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC. MAY I ALSO ADD THAT THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION WILL BE UPLOADED TO A WEBSITE TO BE ADVISED BY THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE.

TODAY MARKS ANOTHER HISTORIC MILESTONE IN THE NATION'S CONSTITUTIONAL HISTORY, AS THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THAT A DRAFT CONSTITUTION HAS BEEN DEVELOPED WITHOUT GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE AND IS BEING SUBJECTED TO PUBLIC COMMENT AND SCRUTINY WITHOUT ANY PARTICULAR VIEWS OR PREFERENCES BEING EXPRESSED BY GOVERNMENT.

**MR. SPEAKER**

ALLOW ME TO EXPRESS ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT, OUR GRATITUDE TO THE PEOPLE OF ZAMBIA NOT ONLY FOR THEIR POSITIVE COMMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION MAKING PROCESS BUT ALSO FOR THE MATURE MANNER IN WHICH THEY HAVE WAITED FOR GOVERNMENT TO CONCLUDE ALL THE PROCESSES

REQUIRED TO FACILITATE THE RELEASE OF THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION TO TAKE THE PROCESS FORWARD.

**MR. SPEAKER**

AS GOVERNMENT HAS INDICATED ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS IN THE PAST, THE NEXT STEPS TO BE UNDERTAKEN IN THE CONSTITUTION MAKING PROCESS ARE PROVIDED FOR UNDER ARTICLE 79 OF THE CONSTITUTION OF ZAMBIA. THE GOVERNMENT IN TAKING THE PROCESS FORWARD WILL IN DUE COURSE MAKE AVAILABLE A DETAILED ROADMAP OF THE REMAINING STEPS TO BE UNDERTAKEN IN THE CONSTITUTION MAKING PROCESS TO ENSURE THAT THE CONSTITUTION IS ENACTED IN THE SHORTEST POSSIBLE TIME.

I WISH TO REAFFIRM GOVERNMENT AND HIS EXCELLENCY MR MICHAEL CHILUFYA SATA'S CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION-MAKING PROCESS AND ITS WILLINGNESS TO CONSULT WITH STAKEHOLDERS WHENEVER OPPORTUNITIES PERMIT. FURTHER, GOVERNMENT WOULD LIKE TO ENCOURAGE ALL STAKEHOLDERS TO THOROUGHLY ANALYSE THE PROVISIONS OF THE DRAFT AND MAKE THEIR OBSERVATIONS ON THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION, IN ORDER FOR WE THE PEOPLE OF ZAMBIA, TO GIVE OURSELVES A CONSTITUTION WHICH WILL ALLOW US TO THRIVE AS A NATION AND WHICH WILL STAND THE TEST OF TIME. MAY GOD BLESS THE NATION AND BLESS YOU ALL.

AS I CONCLUDE I WOULD LIKE ON BEHALF OF THE NATION AT LARGE TO EXPRESS OUR SINCERE GRATITUDE TO THOSE SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF THE SOIL WHO SERVED ON THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE AND THEIR SUPPORT STAFF FOR THEIR DILIGENCE, RESILIENCE AND TENACITY THAT HAS CULMINATED IN THIS FINAL DRAFT CONSTITUTION.

**I THANK YOU AND MAY GOD BLESS OUR NATION.**