

Confidential



Republic of Zambia

Ministerial Statement to Parliament

**By the Hon. Harry Kalaba, MP, Minister of Foreign Affairs
On the 25th Ordinary Session of the African Union Summit
Held in Johannesburg, South Africa
14th – 15th June, 2015**

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
Lusaka
June, 2015**

Mr. Speaker,

I wish to report to this August House that Zambia was among the 54 African Union (AU) Member States that participated in the 25th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, held in Johannesburg, South Africa. The Summit was held from 14th to 15th June, 2015 under the theme **"2015: Year of Women Empowerment and Development towards Africa's Agenda 2063"**.

As per tradition, the Summit was preceded by the 27th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council of the African Union, comprising of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of AU Member States, and the 30th Ordinary Session of the Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC), composed of Permanent Representatives (Ambassadors) accredited to the African Union.

Furthermore, a Ministerial Retreat was convened from 9th -10th June, 2015 whose objectives was to discuss and input into the Agenda 2063 1st Ten- Year Implementation Plan; to discuss and make recommendations on improving the work of the African Union; and to strategise and discuss key Integration issues such as the movement of people and goods.

Mr. Speaker,

The Zambian Delegation was led by His Excellency the President, Mr. Edgar Chagwa Lungu, who was accompanied by myself; Hon. Ngandu Luo, Minister of Gender and Child Development; Hon. Christopher Mvunga, Deputy Minister of Finance; Hon. Keith Mukata, Deputy Minister of Justice; Hon. Freedom Sikazwe, Northern Province Minister. Also present were H.E. Ms. Susan Sikaneta, Zambia's Ambassador to Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to the African Union; H.E. Muyeba Chikonde, Zambia's High Commissioner to South Africa; and Senior Government Officials.

Mr. Speaker,

His Excellency the President also attended the Summit of the Committee of 10 on the United Nations Security Council Reforms; and

the Summit of the New Partnership for Africa's Development Agency (NEPAD) Orientation Committee, which were both held on 13th June, 2015.

It is worth mentioning that at the C10 Summit, the Heads of State applauded Zambia for successfully hosting the Livingstone meeting, and adopted all the decisions that were passed there, with special emphasis on maintaining the Ezulwini Consensus

In addition to attending the afore mentioned Summit, His Excellency the President held bilateral meetings on the margins of Summit, with His Excellency Gen. Muhammadu Buhari, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria; His Excellency Hailemariam Desalegn, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia; Rt. Hon. Pakalitha Bethuel Mosisili, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho.

His Excellency the President also held talks with the Executive Director of the UN Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), and the Executive Secretary of UN Women.

The bilateral meetings were fruitful as they culminated in, for instance, the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on the establishment of the Joint Permanent Commission of Corporation with the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, as well as the strengthening of bilateral cooperation between Zambia and the respective countries. Zambia will also see increased cooperation by way of additional development programs in the areas of women and youth empowerment.

Mr. Speaker,

The major highlight of the Summit was His Excellency the President's participation in a facilitated panel group discussion on the theme of the Summit. President Lungu was one of the Heads of State that addressed the Summit where he highlighted Zambia's scores in women empowerment, amongst other issues. In his statement, His Excellency the President alluded to the fact that Zambia was among the few SADC countries with a female Vice-President, which was a clear demonstration of his Government's commitment to the involvement of women in decision making.

Other highlights include the adoption of the First Ten-Year Plan on Agenda 2063 and the launch of the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) negotiations.

Mr. Speaker,

It gives me great pleasure to inform this house that, during the Assembly, the Republic of Zambia was awarded with the African Gender Scorecard Award, for recognising women in various economic spheres and empowering them.

In addition, His Excellency the President was named, by the UN Women, as the promoter for the "**HeForShe**" campaign, which advocates gender equality and is targeted at ensuring that men are gender-sensitive. The "**HeForShe**" campaign is a solidarity movement for gender equality that brings together one half of humanity in support of the other half of humanity. This is a major achievement for Zambia and it has put Zambia on the world map, as regards the promotion of gender empowerment.

Mr. Speaker,

I am also pleased to announce that during the elections, Ms. Maria Mopani-Kawimbe, a Zambian lawyer, was among six (6) appointed candidates for membership of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) for a five (5)-year term. Other appointed candidates were from Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Tanzania, Ethiopia, and Botswana.

Mr. Speaker,

During the Summit, the Assembly considered and **adopted Eight (8) Decisions, Four Declarations and One Resolution.**

On the issue of **the launch of Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) negotiations**, the Assembly adopted the objectives and principles of negotiating the CFTA; the indicative Roadmap for the Negotiation and establishment of the CFTA; the Terms of Reference for the CFTA Negotiating Forum; the institutional arrangements for the CFTA

negotiation; and the Draft Declaration on the Launch of negotiation for the establishment of the CFTA.

The Continental Free Trade Area is aimed at integrating Africa's markets in line with the objectives and principles enunciated in the Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community.

Mr. Speaker,

During discussions on **the Peace and Security Situation on the Continent**, the Assembly considered a number of conflict situations on the continent including in Libya, Mali, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Central African Republic, Somalia, Tunisia, Madagascar, Liberia and Tunisia.

The Assembly expressed satisfaction with the efforts deployed at continental and regional level to address the scourge of conflicts and promote lasting peace and security. It noted, with concern, that despite its efforts, Africa continued to face serious conflicts and crises with devastating humanitarian and social economic consequences. In this regard, it urgently appealed for stronger action in the area of conflict prevention, management and resolution, as well as in the area of peace building and post conflict reconstruction.

Mr. Speaker,

During discussions on the **2016 AU Budget**, the Assembly approved a total budget of US\$416,867,326 for the African Union for year 2016. On this issue, the Assembly also re-committed itself to finding alternative sources of funding as it currently relies heavily on donor funding for most of the organisation's operations. Currently, donors contribute about 75% of the budget, while Member States contribute 25%.

With regard to **Streamlining of the African Union Summits and the Working Methods of the African Union**, the Assembly approved the recommendation that decision making, by the Executive Council and the Assembly, be clearly delineated and that the Assembly, delegates its decision-making powers and mandates, the Executive Council

except for key strategic decisions. The Assembly committed to making the African Union more effective in pursuit of social and economic sustainability for the African people through greater coordination of regional programmes with the continental agenda.

Mr. Speaker,

The Summit was officially closed by the His Excellency Robert Gabriel Mugabe, as Chairperson of the African Union, on 15th June, 2015.

This August House may wish to note that the Assembly decided to hold the 26th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in January 2016.

In closing, I wish to inform this August House that in order to fulfil her mandate of advancing Economic Diplomacy, Zambia needs to open as many Diplomatic Missions abroad as possible, in order to maximise the benefits of her interaction with the international community and to ultimately achieve the country's development agenda. However, this will be done prudently taking into account the available resources.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you!