

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**  
**ON**  
**ENHANCING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AND ECONOMIC PROGRESS**  
**BY THE**  
**THE MINISTER OF TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCE (MR MUTATI), MP**

Madam Speaker, I wish to thank you for giving me this opportunity to render my first Ministerial Statement in the First Session of the Thirteenth Assembly on “Enhancing Digital Transformation and Economic Progress through Science and Technology”, the role of the Ministry of Technology and Science”.

Madam Speaker, from the outset, allow me to express deep appreciation to the President of the Republic of Zambia Mr Hakainde Hichilema for conferring on me the privilege to serve the Zambian people as hon. Minister of Technology and Science, a task I tend to execute to the best of my ability.

Madam, in the same spirit, I wish to also congratulate His Excellency the President of the Republic of Zambia Mr Hakainde Hichilema on the incisive speech he delivered to this august House on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> September, 2021 – a speech that ably unbundled his Government’s transformation vision for the country for the next five years. Indeed, this country return immense potential in every sector and it is only under the able leadership that it can be can be enhanced for the benefit of our people.

Madam Speaker, I would be remiss if I neglected to also heartily congratulate you on your election as the first ever female Speaker of the National Assembly of Zambia. In his address to Parliament, the President was categorical and I quote:

“We will also a premium on science and technology to promote innovation and contribute to sustainable development. We will increase investments in science research and technology. Government will also encourage investments from the private sector in science, research and technology.”

Madam Speaker, the President's speech fully recognises the major strategy of accelerating technology, science and innovation for social and economic development. In fact, that emphatic pronouncement was followed by the creation of the Ministry of Technology and Science. Following the establishment of the Ministry of Technology and Science, my team and I have been undertaking a visioning exercise to ensure that all programmes in technology, science, research and development, electronic Government, communication technologies and innovations are aligned with the UPND Manifesto. This rethinking will facilitate the creation of an enabling environment and for digital economy as we have also undertaken extensive stakeholder mapping and engagements.

Madam Speaker, Zambia's transformation agenda should be anchored on laying a solid foundation for technology, science, research and innovation and skills development. In addition, the transformation agenda should see all these turned into solutions for our people in order to create happiness. They should spur transformation and create business opportunities at all levels. It is for this reason that I am asserting that my ministry should be at the center of enhancing digital transformation and economic progress through science and technology in order for us to attain the much needed sustainable development.

Madam Speaker, it is therefore, our resolve as a ministry that the digital transformation and all programmes implemented should improve the livelihoods of the Zambian people in all economic and social sectors. We intend to take full profit from current technologies to ensure we reduce the gaps that hold back inclusive and sustainable development.

Madam Speaker, it is not a secret that our citizens are demanding for improved quality of life. In order to satisfy the people's hopes for quality lives, my ministry intends to build a path underpinned by technology, science, research and development and innovation to deliver on this hope. We intend to deliver by underpinning our strategy on five key pillars. Let me now share the five key pillars of our strategic focus.

*An Enabling Environment*

The ministry will create an enabling environment by putting in a policy and legal framework that will support a digital economy. This will include the review of policies such as the ICT and Postal Services Policies as well as a review of the Electronic Government, Science and Technology and Skills Development Act among others.

#### *Access to Digital Infrastructure and Services*

We will put in place measures that will promote affordable access to digital infrastructure through enhanced connectivity, smart gadgets and service quality. This will be realised by expanding the broadband fiber infrastructure across the county and gadgets to reduce costs of connectivity and access.

#### *Digitized Government Systems*

Government services will be digitized in order to promote convenience, reduce transaction costs and eliminate wastage of resources in the delivery and accessing of public services. We will place particular priority on the digitizing of the national registration system. This will integrate all Government services such as FISIP, Social Cash Transfer and Empowerment Programmes.

#### *Up skilling of Citizens*

We will up skill the citizens in order to have digital friendly citizens through a number of measures that will include the review of curriculum, training of trainers, creation of digital hubs, among others.

#### *Protection of People, Data and Infrastructure*

Protection of the people, the data and infrastructure will also be prioritised to ensure that the people are happy with the services

Madam Speaker, through these five pillars, it is our hope that we will realise a digital transformation for the Zambian people in all economic and social sectors. We intend to take full profit from emerging technologies to reduce gaps that hold back inclusive and sustainable development.

In this regard, my ministry is determined to harness talented scientists and innovators especially among the youth whose role will be to cultivate technological innovations and ideas that will be turned into enterprises for not only employment creation, but overall economic growth. This will be implemented within various ecosystems for youth innovators.

Madam Speaker, as I conclude, allow me to reiterate our conviction of leveraging of technology, science, research and innovation to transform our country into a digital economy. It is my conviction that it will bring happiness to the people of Zambia through cost effective, efficient and transparent service delivery from an open Government that places the needs and aspirations of people first.

Madam Speaker, I thank you.

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