

**TUESDAY, 28 MARCH, 2017**

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

GIVEN BY THE

HON. MINISTER OF JUSTICE, MR LUBINDA

ON THE

STATUS OF THE AFRICAN PEER REVIEW MECHANISM

Mr Speaker, I thank you most sincerely for allowing me to make a second statement. Like I said earlier, this is a statement to update the House on Zambia's performance in the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM).

Sir, in honouring its commitment to good governance on the continent, the Government of the Republic of Zambia acceded to the APRM in January, 2006. The APRM is Africa's paramount framework of self monitoring in governance and is voluntarily acceded to by member states of the African Union (AU).

Mr Speaker, the origins of the APRM can be traced to the year 2001. In July of that year, at the 37<sup>th</sup> Summit of the Organisation of African Unity, now the African Union (AU), held here in Lusaka, the Heads of State and Government of the member states of the AU set out a new vision for the development of Africa, the so called New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). NEPAD's main objectives were:

- (a) eradication of poverty;
- (b) promotion of sustainable economic growth;
- (c) integration of Africa into the global economy; and
- (d) promotion of gender equity and women's empowerment

Sir, good governance was identified as a fundamental prerequisite in order to reach these objectives. On 8<sup>th</sup> July, 2002, at the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the AU,

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African leaders adopted the NEPAD declaration on democracy, political, economic and corporate governance.

Mr Speaker, the NEPAD declaration on democracy, political, economic and corporate governance places emphasis on democracy, human rights, free, fair and regular elections, transparency and accountability in both public and private sector organisations, among others.

Sir, Zambia hosted the country review mission in February, 2011, which prepared the country review report from which a national plan of action was drawn. In January 2013, Zambia was peer reviewed during the 18<sup>th</sup> summit that was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Zambia's peer review was followed by the launch of the country review report by the 5<sup>th</sup> Republican President, the late Michael Chilufya Sata, in March, 2014.

Mr Speaker, on 17<sup>th</sup> October, 2016, Zambia's country review report was tabled and discussed by the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) during its ordinary session that was held in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt. Tabling and discussion of the country review report is one of the requirements of the APRM process before the country can be peer reviewed yet again.

Sir, Zambia is expected to undergo a second round of peer review in 2018-2019 to assess the progress made in addressing governance challenges that were identified during the first peer review. Prior to the second peer review, Zambia is expected to prepare at least two progress reports to be presented by His Excellency the President of the Republic of Zambia at the APRM Summit of Heads of State and Government.

Mr Speaker, the National Governing Council, through the Ministry of Justice, facilitated the preparation of the first progress report in 2016. The report was presented at the 26<sup>th</sup> Summit of the Heads of States and Government that was held in Addis Ababa Ethiopia on 28<sup>th</sup> January, 2017, by the President of the Republic of Zambia, His Excellency Mr Edgar Chagwa Lungu.

Sir, the highlights of Zambia's report as presented by His Excellency the President, which emanated from the peer review report that was carried out in Zambia, include the following:

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*Standards and Codes*

Mr Speaker, on this matter, the President reported that the process of establishing a central depository registry of regional and international agreements was initiated through the enactment of a law that would guide the functions of the central depository registry.

*Democracy and Political Governance*

Sir, the President reported that Zambia concluded the consultative process and had amended the Constitution in January, 2016.

*Over Centralised State System*

Mr Speaker, Zambia reported that it had approved the National Decentralisation Policy which would empower provinces and districts to manage their own affairs for effective social economic development.

*Gender Parity to Uphold Principles of the Convention and Elimination of Discrimination against Women*

Sir, Zambia created the Ministry of Gender to spearhead the attainment of gender parity. With regard to female representation at Cabinet level, the Government has made tremendous progress by increasing gender participation in Cabinet from 14 per cent in 2011, to 28 per cent in 2016. That is doubling women participation at cabinet level. President Edgar Lungu deserves to be applauded.

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*Guaranteeing Separation of Powers*

Sir, the President of the Republic of Zambia reported to his peers that the Zambian Constitution enshrined separation of powers among the three organs of the state and safeguards the independence of these organs.

*Economic Governance and Management Issues*

Mr Speaker, the President stated that Zambia's real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate recorded a steady decline from 5.1 per cent in 2013 to 3.2 per cent in 2015. The economic growth averaged 5.3 per cent per annum and that this growth was reduced by poor performance particularly, in the agricultural sector in 2013 and 2015. The growth rate under mining in 2014, 2015 and further, was affected by devastating combination of external shocks in response to which Zambia had put stringent measures to arrest the negative growth of the GDP. On this note, I would like to inform the House and the nation at large that as opposed to what we heard earlier about crop failure, as for the 2016/2017 Farming Season, with the early delivery of inputs, private sector agriculture and the sufficient rain that our Good Lord has blessed us with this year, we anticipate a larger harvest than we have recorded before.

*Diversification of the Zambian Economy*

Sir, the President reported that Zambia had established private sector development, industrialisation and job creation in January, 2015 to coordinate the implementation of the industrialisation and job creation strategy and to provide a coherent guidance on salient strategies that promote the diversification of the nation's economy.

*Promotion of Corporate Social Responsibility (ICR)*

Mr Speaker, the President reported that Zambia had experienced a drastic reduction in the level of involvement by private firms in developmental programmes until 2014. The Government of

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Zambia had rekindled the practice by strengthening the Public Private Partnership (PPP) initiatives in 2015.

*Unequal Distribution of Income*

Sir, it was reported that the Government of the Republic of Zambia reviewed salaries of employees across the country in order to ensure equity in the distribution of salaries by narrowing the gap between the salary scales.

*Deficit in Housing*

Mr Speaker, the President reported that the Government had prioritised the construction of housing units during the period 2017 to 2021, through a number of public as well as private initiatives and strategies.

*Poor State of Feeder Roads in Rural Areas*

Sir, Zambia had initiated the Link 8,000 km Road Project programme (accelerated national roads construction programme) aimed at transforming Zambia into a truly land-linked country and programme for improvement of a total of 13,422.9 km of primary feeder roads by 2024. He added that by the end of 2016, a total of 3,358.90 km had been achieved.

*Cross-Cutting Issues*

Mr Speaker, the President reported that in an effort to fight corruption, Zambia was encouraging spending agencies to establish Integrity Committees (ICs) in line with provisions of the new Anti-Corruption Act and that the Government had also intensified community awareness programmes to encourage community participation. In 2016, Zambia launched a national slogan, “A Corruption Free Zambia Begins With Me” which was aimed at driving the country’s anti-corruption crusade.

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*Maturity of Democratic Practice*

Mr Speaker, the penultimate point was on the maturity of democratic practice. His Excellency the President reported to his peers that the country's democracy had been augmented by the amendment of the Constitution in 2016, which included progressive provisions which were important in safeguarding a maturing democracy. He further stated that despite the said successes, the country had faced a challenge of maintaining a steady voter-turnout which was showing a downward trend particularly, at presidential election level. The President also did report that there was poor performance particularly, on the referendum and the enhancement of the Bill of Rights (BOR).

*Social Cash Transfer Scheme (SCTS)*

Sir, His Excellency the President reported that the scheme had been expanded tremendously from the time of Zambia's country review mission in 2011, when there were only 51,308 beneficiaries in ten districts. By December, 2016, the number of beneficiaries had increased to 242,000 from seventy-eight districts and that Zambia was aiming to roll-out the programme to cover all districts in the country. As we all know, in 2017, the number of beneficiaries has been increased to 590,000 in all districts of our dear country.

Mr Speaker, in response to the presentation by His Excellency the President of the Republic of Zambia, Mr Edgar Chagwa Lungu, the Africa Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), Forum Chairperson, His Excellency the President, Mr Uhuru Kinyata congratulated his brother for the progress made in presenting the first Progress Report. He noted Zambia's determination for the second peer review. He encouraged His Excellency the President, Mr Lungu to maintain the stance that Zambia has taken in implementing its national plan of action.

Mr Speaker, Zambia's Progress Report was well-received by various states of the African Union (AU), who all congratulated her. It was worth noting that the following countries specifically congratulated Zambia when they made their own statements. All of them touched on Zambia's first Progress Report.

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Sir, the first one was the Namibian President, His Excellency the President, Dr Hage Geingob, who joined other peers in congratulating Zambia for presenting the first Progress Report. President Geingob indicated that Namibia and Zambia had a lot in common and that Namibia would learn a lot from Zambia on APRM.

Mr Speaker, the Senegalese President, His Excellency, Mr Macky Sall also congratulated his Excellency the President of the Republic of Zambia for the presentation of the first Progress Report. President Sall recalled Zambia's long standing history of warm hospitality and peace and particularly, for hosting many Senegalese. He thanked His Excellency for the good gesture.

Mr Speaker, as many will know and as I have stated earlier, APRM is concerned about four thematic areas. These are the ones against which member states performance is assessed. For the sake of clarity, the thematic areas are namely:

- (a) democracy and good political governance;
- (b) economic governance and management;
- (c) corporate governance; and
- (d) socio-economic development.

Sir, the Government of His Excellency the President, Mr Edgar Chagwa Lungu is not only committed but is indeed, determined to continue enhancing the provision of high quality leadership in these and all other areas of human endeavour. It is in light of the foregoing that we call upon all citizens of this great country to be patriotic and contribute to the betterment of the whole country.

Sir, the performance of Zambia in the thematic areas I have spoken about was confirmed in recently produced 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG)

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Report. The Mo IIAG is a quantifiable tool to measure and monitor governance performance in African countries, to assess its progress over time and to support the development of effective and responsive policy solutions.

The 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Report analyses and compares the performance of all African countries over a period of ten years, 2006 to 2015. In brief, Sir, this is what the report says about Zambia, and I quote:

“Zambia has improved in every category in the Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) over the last ten years, resulting in an improvement of +4.3 score points at the overall governance level leading the country to rank 13<sup>th</sup> on the continent four rank places higher than a decade ago when the country ranked 18<sup>th</sup>.”

It goes on to say:

“In safety and rule of law, Zambia ranks ninth Out of 54 countries and is the tenth most improved country in accountability with diversion of public funds and access to information featuring among countries ten most improved.”

Sir, I am going to lay the report on the Table so that those who are not capable of finding such reports may take advantage of your grace and can read the report. Sir, this report is the Moore Ibrahim Foundation Report - a decade of African governance.

Sir, having successfully presented the first progress report on the implementation of the National Plan of Action, Zambia is now set to undertake the following projects under the Africa Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) process:

- (a) dissemination of a report on the first progress report. In doing this, I would to echo the sentiments of His Excellency the President, Please, let us read.

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Again, Sir, for the sake of my colleagues who may have difficulty finding this report, allow me to lay it on the Table so that they may read it themselves.

- (b) sensitisation of new districts on the Africa Peer Review Mechanism because these new districts did not take part in the initial sensitisation process.
- (c) the Government of Zambia shall increase budgetary allocation to the APRM process;
- (d) shall enhance mainstreaming of the APRM National Plan of Action in national planning processes and those who will lay their hands on the Seventh National Development Plan (SNDP) will find therein, that the ambitions encapsulated in the APRM Plan of Action are actually included in the SNDP; and
- (e) shall engage in monitoring the implementation of the National Plan of Action.

Mr Speaker, Zambia will continue to implement the National Plan of Action and monitor the progress being made in readiness for the second progress report.

I want to end by saying we ought to sing our song when we do well and, here, Africa has led us to sing our song because it has appreciated that, indeed, Zambia, under the leadership of President Edgar Chagwa Lungu is on the right trajectory to development.

Sir, I thank you.