

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

ON THE

PREPARATIONS FOR THIS YEAR'S NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER, FASTING,
REPENTANCE AND RECONCILIATION

BY THE

**HON. MINISTER OF NATIONAL GUIDANCE AND RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS
(REV. SUMAILI), MP**

Mr Speaker, I thank you most sincerely for giving me this opportunity to make a statement on the preparations for this year's National Day of Prayer, Fasting, Repentance and Reconciliation which falls on Sunday, 18th October, 2020.

Mr Speaker, since the declaration of Zambia as a Christian Nation in 1991, by the late Republican President, Dr Fredrick Titus Jacob Chiluba, a number of steps have been taken to actualise the declaration by making Christianity the cornerstone of our Republic. Thus, the National Values and Principles enshrined in Part II, Article 8 of the Constitution are in alignment with the Christian faith and are the foundation of our national development. His Excellency Dr Edgar Chagwa Lungu the President of the Republic of Zambia reaffirmed this aspiration to see the transformation of the Republic as a Christian nation by among other things declaring 18th October as a National Day of Prayer, Fasting, Repentance and Reconciliation according to Statutory Instrument No.78 of 2015 and Gazette Notice of 23rd October, 2015. Therefore, as a Christian nation that acknowledges the supremacy of God almighty in all its affairs, the 18th Day of October is set apart to seek the face of God, give thanks, reflect, repent and reconcile for continued peace, prosperity and unity. The praying with fasting opens heaven's gate for God's blessings to flood our nation.

Mr Speaker, I wish to inform this august House and the nation at large that preparations for this year's commemoration are at an advanced stage at national, provincial and district levels. Some chiefdoms are also preparing for these prayers.

Mr Speaker, the theme for this year's National Day of Prayer with Fasting is:

“Zambia Seeks God's Intervention for Sustained National Unity, Peace and Prosperity.”

This theme is founded on the word of God from Isaiah 43:2-3; John 3:2, 2 Chronicles 7:14. The scriptures anchoring the theme speak of the power of prayer with fasting and God's will to heal and prosper the land. Nothing is impossible with God. All we need to do is to humble ourselves and repent then God will hear us and heal the land.

Mr Speaker, this year's prayer and fasting convocation is coming at a time of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic and the resultant socio-economic challenges. The country is also at a time of preparing for the 2021 Tripartite General Elections. It is therefore, critical for us to pray earnestly and fervently for the recovery of our socio-economic systems and the sustenance of our peace and unity in the nation.

Mr Speaker, the National Day of Prayer is being organised by the clergy from various denominations working hand in hand with the Ministry of National Guidance and Religious Affairs, provincial administration offices and the districts commissioners' offices. The arrangements for this year's commemorations will be different from previous years. The event will be conducted under strict adherence to Public Health Guidelines given by the Ministry of Health. Attendance to this year's commemoration will be by invitation only. Proceedings will be aired on both national television and radio including community radio stations.

Mr Speaker, since 18th October, 2020 is falling on a Sunday, we expect Churches to observe this important day and theme and to pray accordingly. Our Zambian missions abroad are expected to observe this day and participate in the praying with fasting.

Mr Speaker, the venue for the main national event in Lusaka will be held at the Mulungushi International Conference Centre and will be graced by His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Zambia Mr Edgar Chagwa Lungu. The Vice-President of the Republic of Zambia Mrs. Inonge Mutukwa Wina (MP) will grace the Commemoration which will be held in Chipata, Eastern Province.

Sir, the Provincial hon. Ministers will grace the commemoration events, which will be held within their respective provinces. While the district commissioners will be expected to grace the commemoration, which will be held at the designated places within their respective districts. These Inter-denominational gatherings in all provinces and districts will be held in their designated convenient places following strictly Coronavirus Disease-2019 (Covid-19) health guidelines. The dress code will be formal, lounge suit, Church uniforms, *Chitenge* outfits and outfits in *Zambian* colours.

Mr Speaker, as I conclude, I wish to reiterate that a nation that trusts and exhausts the Lord is blessed. Let us come together on the 18th of October, 2020, in unity regardless of our differences in our political affiliations and denominations. Let us seek the face of God in our diversity.

Sir, let me take this opportunity to encourage hon. Members of this august House to pray on this day with the people they represent. We are a spiritual people of hope, a nation of faith and we shall continue to face the future with confidence in the promises and faithfulness of our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ.

I thank you, Mr Speaker.