

MR. SPEAKER,

1. I COME HERE TODAY COGNISANT OF THE FACT THAT THE HOPE OF OUR NATION RESTS, IN GREATER PART, WITH US THE HONOURABLE MEN AND WOMEN IN THIS AUGUST HOUSE. WE HAVE THE GREATEST POWER IN OUR LAND. THE POWER TO SHAPE THE DESTINY OF OUR COUNTRY, THE POWER TO TRANSLATE THE DREAMS AND HOPES OF OUR PEOPLE INTO REALITY. A REALITY OF FOOD ON THE TABLE OF EACH HOUSEHOLD, HEALTHCARE AND EDUCATION ON THE DOOR STEP OF EVERY COMMUNITY IN A VIBRANT ECONOMY WITH A PLACE IN IT FOR EVERYONE.

2. YES, WE, IN THIS HOUSE, ARE THE HOPE OF OUR PEOPLE. SO, WE MEET ON THIS OCCASION TO MARK THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE THIRD SESSION OF THE TWELFTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ON THE PRESUMPTION THAT THERE IS SO MUCH TO BE DONE, SO MUCH TO BE ACCOMPLISHED, AND YET SO LITTLE TIME TO WASTE.

MR. SPEAKER,

3. DURING THIS ADDRESS, I WILL SHARE WITH THE NATION, THROUGH THIS AUGUST HOUSE, THE AMBITIOUS TRANSFORMATIONAL AGENDA THAT THE PATRIOTIC FRONT GOVERNMENT HAS CONTINUED TO PURSUE IN MAKING OUR GREAT COUNTRY, ZAMBIA, A PROSPEROUS MIDDLE INCOME COUNTRY.

MR. SPEAKER,

4. BEFORE I PROCEED WITH MY ADDRESS, LET ME ASK THE HOUSE TO JOIN ME IN OBSERVING A MINUTE OF SILENCE IN HONOUR OF THE LATE HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT FOR KASENENGWA AND MANGANGO CONSTITUENCIES, MS. VICTORIA KALIMA AND MR NALUWA MWEENE, WHO PASSED ON 11TH JUNE, 2018 AND 28TH AUGUST, 2018 RESPECTIVELY.

5. MAY THEIR SOULS FIND ETERNAL REST IN THE PERFECT PEACE OF GOD ALMIGHTY.

MR. SPEAKER,

6. DURING THE SECOND SESSION OF THE TWELFTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, THE HONOURABLE MEMBERS DEBATED THE BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE WITH DEEP COMMITMENT IN LINE WITH OUR DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES. I WISH TO THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR INVALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS.

MR. SPEAKER,

7. IT WOULD BE REMISS ON MY PART NOT TO EXPRESS MY GRATITUDE TO YOU AND YOUR DEPUTIES FOR THE EFFICIENT AND ABLE MANNER IN WHICH YOU PRESIDED OVER THE BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE DURING THE LAST SESSION.

8. MY GRATITUDE ALSO GOES TO THE LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS, HER HONOUR THE VICE PRESIDENT, FOR CONDUCTING

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS IN THE HOUSE WITH UTMOST DECORUM AND DILIGENCE.

9. THE CLERK OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND HER STAFF ALSO DESERVE COMMENDATION FOR THE INVALUABLE SERVICE THEY CONTINUE TO RENDER TO THIS HOUSE.

MR. SPEAKER,

10. ALLOW ME TO CONGRATULATE THE NEW PATRIOTIC FRONT MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT FOR CHILANGA AND KASENENGWA CONSTITUENCIES, MRS. MARIA LANGA AND MR SENSIO BANDA. I WISH TO REMIND THE TWO HONOURABLE MEMBERS THAT THE PEOPLE OF YOUR CONSTITUENCIES HAVE PLACED THEIR TRUST IN YOU SO PLEASE REPRESENT THEM ABLY.

MR. SPEAKER,

11. LET ME NOW GO INTO THE DETAILS OF MY ADDRESS WHOSE THEME IS, ***“WORKING TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE VISION 2030.”***

12. OUR VISION AS A COUNTRY IS TO BECOME A PROSPEROUS MIDDLE-INCOME NATION BY 2030. WE ASPIRE TO BUILD A STRONG AND DYNAMIC INDUSTRIAL NATION THAT PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES

FOR IMPROVING THE WELL-BEING OF ALL OUR PEOPLE AND EMBODIES VALUES OF SOCIO ECONOMIC JUSTICE.

13. BY 2030, WE WANT TO SEE A ZAMBIA WHERE EVERY CITIZEN HAS ACCESS TO SAFE CLEAN WATER, FOOD, DECENT HOUSING, ELECTRICITY, QUALITY EDUCATION AND HEALTH SERVICES AND DECENT JOBS. IN PURSUIT OF THIS VISION, WE NEED TO TRANSFORM INTO A SMART ZAMBIA.

14. IN THIS REGARD, WE NEED TO ADOPT MODERN, DYNAMIC AND INNOVATIVE WAYS OF DOING THINGS. WE ALSO HAVE TO CONTINUOUSLY RESEARCH, LEARN AND ADOPT NEW AND BETTER WAYS OF DOING BUSINESS. EQUALLY, WE NEED TO BE RESOURCEFUL, EFFICIENT AND PRODUCTIVE IN ALL THAT WE DO.

MR. SPEAKER,

15. THIS THEME BUILDS ON OUR COMMITMENT AS GOVERNMENT TO MAKE ZAMBIA A PROSPEROUS NATION. THE THEME IS ALSO AN AFFIRMATION OF OUR ABIDING BELIEF THAT ZAMBIA, AFRICA AND THE WORLD AT LARGE CAN BE A BETTER PLACE FOR ALL OF US IF WE WORK TOWARDS ACHIEVING COMMON GOALS.

16. THE THEME IS ALSO IN SYNC WITH GOVERNMENT'S DEVELOPMENT AGENDA THROUGH THE SEVENTH NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN, WHICH IS OUR ROADMAP TO ACTUALISING THE

VISION 2030 OF BECOMING A PROSPEROUS MIDDLE-INCOME COUNTRY.

17. IN PURSUING THIS VISION, WE ARE MINDFUL THAT OUR SOCIETY IS NOT HOMOGENOUS. THERE ARE THOSE OF OUR PEOPLE THAT ARE STRUGGLING TO MAKE ENDS MEET, THERE ARE OTHERS WHO ARE DISADVANTAGED BY REASON OF GENDER OR DISABILITY. YES, THERE ARE THOSE WHO FEEL EXCLUDED BY VIRTUE OF LIVING ON THE MARGINS OF SOCIETY WITH LIMITED ACCESS TO EDUCATION, HEALTH AND OTHER SOCIAL AMENITIES. IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT GOVERNMENT REMAINS COMMITTED TO NOT LEAVING ANYONE BEHIND.

MR. SPEAKER,

18. LET ME ASSURE THIS AUGUST HOUSE AND THE NATION AT LARGE THAT THIS GOVERNMENT MEANS WHAT IT SAYS. AS GOVERNMENT, OUR COMMITMENT IS TO MAKE ZAMBIA A LAND OF OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL, A COUNTRY ON THE MOVE TOWARDS ACHIEVING PROSPERITY FOR ALL, AND A NATION DETERMINED TO SECURE THE FUTURE OF ITS PEOPLE. MY PARTY'S MANIFESTO SAYS AND I QUOTE, **"THE VISION OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT ... IS TO MAKE ZAMBIA A MORE INDUSTRIOUS, PROSPEROUS, PEACEFUL, STABLE, UNITED, DEMOCRATIC AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETY UNDER THE MOTTO OF ONE ZAMBIA ONE NATION,"** END OF QUOTE. THIS VISION IS TAINABLE. IN DOING SO, WE NEED TO EMBRACE SMART TECHNOLOGIES AND INNOVATIONS AS A

WAY OF LIFE AND LIVE UP TO OUR NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES NOW. NOT TOMORROW, NOT IN FUTURE, BUT NOW.

MR. SPEAKER,

19. THE CHOICE OF THIS YEAR'S THEME BEARS FURTHER TESTIMONY TO OUR COMMITMENT TO THE AFRICAN UNION AGENDA 2063 FOR THE ATTAINMENT OF THE AFRICA WE WANT. THE THEME ALSO RESONATES WELL WITH THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS.

MR. SPEAKER,

20. MY ADDRESS TO THIS AUGUST HOUSE WILL FOCUS ON MACROECONOMIC SITUATION, ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION AND JOB CREATION, POVERTY AND VULNERABILITY REDUCTION, REDUCING DEVELOPMENTAL INEQUALITIES, ENHANCING HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND CREATING A CONDUCIVE GOVERNANCE ENVIRONMENT FOR A DIVERSIFIED AND INCLUSIVE ECONOMY.

MACROECONOMIC SITUATION

MR. SPEAKER,

21. A SMART AND PROSPEROUS ZAMBIA CANNOT BE ATTAINED WITHOUT A STRONG AND GROWING ECONOMY. IN THIS REGARD, GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO PUT EMPHASIS ON MACRO-ECONOMIC STABILITY.

22. OUR ECONOMY HAS CONTINUED ON A POSITIVE TRAJECTORY, REGISTERING A GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT GROWTH RATE OF **3.4** PERCENT IN 2017, WHILE IN 2018, THIS HAS BEEN PROJECTED TO BE AROUND **4** PERCENT. GROWTH IN 2018 IS BEING SUPPORTED BY THE CONTINUED POSITIVE PERFORMANCE IN THE MINING, MANUFACTURING AND TRADE SECTORS, AS WELL AS STABLE ELECTRICITY GENERATION AND SUPPLY.

23. THE KWACHA HAS BEEN RESILIENT, MAINTAINING STABILITY AGAINST MAJOR CONVERTIBLE CURRENCIES. INFLATION HAS REMAINED WITHIN SINGLE DIGIT LEVELS AND IS EXPECTED TO CLOSE 2018 WITHIN THE TARGET RANGE OF SIX-TO-EIGHT PERCENT. THIS PREDICTABLE MACROECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT IS CRITICAL FOR BUILDING INVESTOR CONFIDENCE AS WELL AS SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE MEDIUM TO LONG TERM.

MR. SPEAKER,

24. IN AN EFFORT TO ADDRESS THE HIGH LENDING RATES, GOVERNMENT HAS ALSO CONTINUED TO RESTRUCTURE NON-PERFORMING LOAN PORTFOLIOS THROUGH DISMANTLING OF DOMESTIC ARREARS. I URGE FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS TO COMPLEMENT GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS BY LOWERING LENDING RATES. THIS WILL ENABLE THE PRIVATE SECTOR, ESPECIALLY SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES, TO HAVE EASY ACCESS TO FINANCE AND POSITIVELY CONTRIBUTE TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

MR. SPEAKER,

25. THE DEBT STOCK AND DOMESTIC ARREARS OF THE COUNTRY HAVE, IN THE RECENT PAST, BEEN TOPICAL. IT SHOULD, HOWEVER, BE EMPHASISED THAT THE CONTRACTION OF THIS DEBT WAS NECESSARY TO SUPPORT OUR AMBITIOUS AGENDA OF LAYING A SOLID FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE GROWTH OF OUR ECONOMY. FOR OUR PEOPLE, THIS IS BEING APPRECIATED THROUGH ROADS, SCHOOLS AND HOSPITALS BEING CONSTRUCTED, WHICH ARE CRITICAL TO THEIR WELL-BEING.

26. I WISH TO ASSURE THE NATION, THROUGH THIS HOUSE, THAT GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO ENSURING A SPEEDY RETURN TO LOW RISK OF DEBT DISTRESS AND MAINTAINING THE DEBT WITHIN SUSTAINABLE LEVELS.

MR. SPEAKER,

27. THE HONOURABLE MINISTER OF FINANCE WILL SOON BE PRESENTING TO THIS AUGUST HOUSE THE 2019 NATIONAL BUDGET. THE BUDGET WILL BUILD ON POLICIES AS OUTLINED IN THE ECONOMIC STABILISATION GROWTH PROGRAMME AND THE SEVENTH NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN.

28. I URGE THE HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT TO TAKE KEEN INTEREST TO UNDERSTAND AND APPRECIATE THE DETAILS OF THE 2019 BUDGET AND TO SUPPORT IT WHEN IT COMES BEFORE THE HOUSE.

ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION AND JOB CREATION

29. TO ATTAIN OUR VISION 2030, WE SHOULD BE MINDFUL THAT WE MUST DIVERSIFY OUR ECONOMY AND CREATE JOBS.

MR. SPEAKER,

30. LET ME NOW HIGHLIGHT WHAT GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN DOING TO DIVERSIFY OUR ECONOMY AND CREATE JOBS FOR OUR PEOPLE.

31. IN THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR, GOVERNMENT HAS CONTINUED TO FOCUS ON INCREASING AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, STEPPING UP THE AGRICULTURAL DIVERSIFICATION PROGRAMME AND IMPROVING FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION.

MR. SPEAKER,

32. TO ENHANCE AGRICULTURE DIVERSIFICATION AND PROMOTE VALUE ADDITION, GOVERNMENT IS SUPPORTING A NUMBER OF PIPELINE PROJECTS TO BE IMPLEMENTED OVER THE NEXT TWO YEARS. THESE INCLUDE THE PALM OIL PLANTATION AND PROCESSING PROJECT IN MUCHINGA PROVINCE AND THE TEA PLANTATION AND PROCESSING PROJECT IN LUAPULA PROVINCE.

33. THE PALM OIL PROJECT IS ON COURSE. THROUGH AN OUT GROWER SCHEME, THE INVESTMENT WILL IMPROVE THE INCOMES AND LIVELIHOODS OF **5,000** BENEFICIARIES OF WHICH **30** PERCENT WILL BE WOMEN AND YOUTHS.

34. THE KAWAMBWA TEA ESTATE HAS BEEN REVIVED BY GOVERNMENT AND IS FULLY OPERATIONAL. SO FAR, OVER **K30 MILLION** HAS BEEN INVESTED INTO THE TEA ESTATE RESULTING IN THE CREATION OF **500** LOCAL JOBS.

35. FURTHER, WE ARE FACILITATING MARKET LINKAGES FOR FARMERS WITH A VIEW TO PROMOTING VALUE ADDITION TO AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE. IN THIS REGARD, **900** SOYABEAN FARMERS HAVE BEEN LINKED TO THE GLOBAL INDUSTRIES LIMITED OF NDOLA, WHO ARE PROCESSING SOYA BEANS AND **151** GROUNDNUT FARMERS TO ABUNDANT FOODS LIMITED IN KITWE.

MR. SPEAKER,

36. DIVERSIFICATION IN AGRICULTURE IS FURTHER BEING ENHANCED THROUGH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE E-VOUCHER SYSTEM WHICH WAS ROLLED OUT TO ALL THE DISTRICTS IN THE 2017/2018 FARMING SEASON. A TOTAL OF **716,161** OUT OF **804,260** FARMERS WERE ABLE TO ACCESS INPUTS, REPRESENTING OVER **80** PERCENT OF THE FARMERS WHO MADE THE REQUIRED CONTRIBUTION. IT ALSO PUTS MORE MONEY IN THE POCKETS OF OUR FARMERS, WHO HAD A WIDER CHOICE OF WHAT TO PRODUCE. IN ADDITION, **5,800** AGRO-DEALERS PARTICIPATED IN THE SUPPLY OF INPUTS WHICH RESULTED IN THE CREATION OF OVER **23,000** JOBS FOR OUR PEOPLE.

37. I WISH TO ASSURE THE NATION, THAT GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE IMPLEMENTING THE E-VOUCHER SYSTEM FOR IMPROVED EFFICIENCY, TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF FARMER INPUT SUPPORT PROGRAMME.

38. THE FARMER INPUT SUPPORT PROGRAMME IS NOT MEANT TO CATER FOR ALL OUR FARMERS. I, THEREFORE, URGE THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO COMPLEMENT GOVERNMENT'S EFFORT BY MAKING INPUTS READILY AVAILABLE TO OUR FARMERS COUNTRY-WIDE AT AFFORDABLE COST.

MR. SPEAKER,

39. IN THE FISHERIES SUB-SECTOR, AQUACULTURE PRODUCTION GREW BY **61** PERCENT FROM **10,500** METRIC TONNES BETWEEN JANUARY AND JUNE 2015 TO **16, 910** METRIC TONNES OVER THE SAME PERIOD THIS YEAR. THE GROWTH WAS DUE TO INCREASED FISH PRODUCTION BY BOTH COMMERCIAL AND SMALL HOLDER FARMERS.

40. TO FURTHER SUPPORT AQUACULTURE ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT, GOVERNMENT IS FACILITATING THE DEVELOPMENT OF FIVE OUT-GROWER CLUSTERS IN BANGWEULU, CHIPEPO, RUFUNSA, KASEMPA AND MUNGWI IN ORDER TO CONTRIBUTE TO INCREASED FISH PRODUCTION.

MR. SPEAKER,

41. THE PERFORMANCE OF THE LIVESTOCK SUB-SECTOR HAS CONTINUED TO SHOW POSITIVE GROWTH. FROM JANUARY TO JUNE, 2018, THE NATIONAL POPULATION OF PIGS GREW BY **84.4** PERCENT, POULTRY BY **33.1** PERCENT, GOATS BY **24.9** PERCENT, SHEEP BY **20.2** PERCENT AND CATTLE BY **12.8** PERCENT.

42. THE GROWTH IS DUE TO THE SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAMMES SUCH AS LIVESTOCK STOCKING AND RESTOCKING, ENHANCED DISEASE CONTROL, CREATION OF LIVESTOCK SERVICE CENTRES, BUILDING OF MILK COLLECTION CENTRES AND DIP TANKS AS WELL AS CREATION OF BULKING CENTRES FOR ANIMALS MEANT FOR EXPORT.

43. THE GROWTH IN THE FISHERIES AND LIVESTOCK SUB-SECTORS IS IMPACTING POSITIVELY ON OUR ECONOMY BY IMPROVING INCOMES, FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION.

MR. SPEAKER,

44. WE HAVE PROMISED OUR PEOPLE THAT AGRICULTURE IS THE MAINSTAY OF OUR ECONOMY. THE PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES WE ARE IMPLEMENTING ARE INDEED OUR HOPE FOR INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT. LET US ALL DIRECT OUR EFFORTS TOWARDS GROWING THIS SECTOR.

MR. SPEAKER,

45. DIVERSIFICATION WITHIN THE MINING SECTOR FROM COPPER TO OTHER MINERALS SUCH AS INDUSTRIAL MINERALS, PETROLEUM AND GEMSTONES IS BEING ENHANCED. FURTHER, GOVERNMENT CONTINUES TO PROMOTE VALUE ADDITION IN THE SECTOR IN A BID TO CREATE BACKWARD AND FORWARD LINKAGES WITH OTHER SECTORS OF THE ECONOMY.

46. IN THE AREA OF GEMSTONES AND INDUSTRIAL MINERALS, GOVERNMENT HAS CONTINUED TO PRIORITISE THE GENERATION OF GEOLOGICAL INFORMATION. THIS YEAR, AN ADDITIONAL **0.9** PERCENT OF THE COUNTRY HAS BEEN GEOLOGICALLY AND STRUCTURALLY MAPPED, BRINGING THE TOTAL LAND MAPPED

COUNTRYWIDE TO **61** PERCENT. GEOLOGICAL MAPPING HAS CONTRIBUTED TO MAKING ACCESS TO INFORMATION FOR PROSPECTIVE INVESTMENT IN MINING EASIER.

MR. SPEAKER,

47. IT IS GRATIFYING TO NOTE THAT POSITIVE GROWTH HAS BEEN RECORDED IN COPPER PRODUCTION SUPPORTED BY FAVOURABLE PRICES ON THE INTERNATIONAL MARKET, IMPROVED GRADES AS WELL AS INCREASED INVESTMENTS. IN THIS REGARD, COPPER PRODUCTION INCREASED FROM **371,285** METRIC TONNES IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2017 TO **410,919** METRIC TONNES IN THE SAME PERIOD THIS YEAR.

48. COPPER EXPORT EARNINGS INCREASED BY 22.8 PERCENT FROM 2.8 BILLION UNITED STATES DOLLARS BETWEEN JANUARY AND JUNE 2017 TO 3.5 BILLION UNITED STATES DOLLARS IN THE SAME PERIOD IN 2018. IT IS GOVERNMENT'S POLICY TO SEE VALUE ADDITION TO OUR COPPER. THIS IS ALREADY HAPPENING AT ZAMEFA IN LUANSHYA, ZALCO IN KABWE AND NEELKANTH CABLE LIMITED IN MASAITI WHICH ARE MANUFACTURING ELECTRICAL CABLES. WE WANT TO SEE MORE VALUE ADDITION TO OUR RESOURCES.

MR. SPEAKER,

49. IN THE TOURISM SECTOR, ZAMBIA HAS THE POTENTIAL TO BE A TOURISM HUB IN THE REGION AND BEYOND. IT IS IN THIS REGARD, THAT GOVERNMENT HAS PUT PRIORITY ON CREATING AN ENABLING

ENVIRONMENT FOR TOURISM SECTOR GROWTH. IN 2017 THE SECTOR GREW BY **6.1** PERCENT COMPARED TO **1.2** PERCENT IN 2016.

50. THE GROWTH WAS SPURRED BY AN EXPANDED PRODUCT BASE FROM TRADITIONAL TOURISM PACKAGES OF HANDICRAFTS, WILDLIFE AND THE VICTORIA FALLS TO INCLUDE HERITAGE SITES, MEETINGS AND SPORTING EVENTS SUCH AS THE HOSTING OF THE UNDER 20 AFRICA CUP OF NATIONS, MINE TOURS AND CULTURAL EVENTS. MEDICAL TOURISM, ENHANCED USE OF E-MARKETING PLATFORMS, INCREASED TRADE AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE E-VISA WERE OTHER FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE GROWTH.

51. IN A BID TO PROMOTE SAFARI AND PHOTOGRAPHIC TOURISM, GOVERNMENT HAS EMBARKED ON THE RESTOCKING OF WILDLIFE. SO FAR, SIOMA NGWEZI NATIONAL PARK AND BANGWEULU GAME MANAGEMENT AREA HAVE SUCCESSFULLY BEEN RESTOCKED. IN ADDITION, SEVEN PRIVATE GAME RANCHES HAVE ALSO RESTOCKED. FURTHER, THE PROMOTION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVANCIES BY OUR TRADITIONAL LEADERS IS MEANT TO ENHANCE PROTECTION OF OUR WILDLIFE STOCK.

52. TO DEMONSTRATE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SAFARI, PHOTOGRAPHIC AND FILMING TOURISM, I WISH TO REPORT THAT GOVERNMENT RAISED **K111.8 MILLION** IN 2017 FROM **K110 MILLION** IN 2016.

53. FURTHER, GOVERNMENT HAS RECORDED INCREASED REVENUES FROM THE TOURISM LEVY WHICH WAS INTRODUCED IN 2017. TO THIS END, GOVERNMENT RAISED OVER **K9.5 MILLION** IN 2017 AND **K8.8 MILLION** HAS BEEN RAISED BETWEEN JANUARY AND JULY THIS YEAR. THESE FUNDS ARE USED TO ENHANCE TOURISM, MARKETING AND PRODUCT PROMOTION AS WELL AS REHABILITATION OF TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE.

MR. SPEAKER,

54. MEMBERS OF THIS AUGUST HOUSE MAY WISH TO RECALL THAT SOUTH LUANGWA NATIONAL PARK WAS DECLARED AN INTERNATIONAL SUSTAINABLE WILDLIFE PARK BY THE UNITED NATIONS WORLD TOURISM ORGANISATION. THIS DECLARATION AIMS AT PROTECTING THE PRISTINE NATURE OF OUR GAME PARK BY ENSURING THAT THERE IS LIMITED HUMAN ACTIVITY ALLOWED. FURTHER, THE DECLARATION HAS GIVEN ZAMBIA AN ADDED SELLING POINT FOR THE PROMOTION OF OUR TOURISM.

MR. SPEAKER,

55. ENERGY IS ONE OF THE VITAL ENABLERS FOR ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION AND JOB CREATION. IN THIS REGARD, GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO FACILITATING ACCESS TO CLEAN, SAFE, RELIABLE AND AFFORDABLE ENERGY FOR OUR PEOPLE. THIS REINFORCES OUR RESOLVE TO ACHIEVE A SMART ZAMBIA.

56. IN MY PREVIOUS PRONOUNCEMENTS TO THIS HOUSE, GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT FOR ZAMBIA TO ATTAIN THE STATUS OF BEING A NET EXPORTER OF ELECTRICITY WAS MADE LOUD AND CLEAR. FOLLOWING THE VARIOUS INVESTMENTS IN THE ELECTRICITY SUB-SECTOR, OUR CURRENT INSTALLED CAPACITY STANDS AT **2,878 MEGAWATTS** AGAINST THE TARGET OF **3,746 MEGAWATTS BY 2021**. THIS HAS REDUCED LOAD SHEDDING AND INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY ACROSS INDUSTRIES.

57. MY INTERACTION WITH YOUNG PEOPLE RUNNING WELDING WORKSHOPS, SALONS AND CHICKEN-RUNS ASSURES ME THAT THERE ARE NO MORE CONCERNS REGARDING POWER SUPPLY AND THIS HAS HELPED TO STABILISE THEIR BUSINESSES AND INCOMES. THIS IS WHAT WE MEAN BY PUTTING MONEY IN OUR PEOPLE'S POCKETS.

58. CURRENTLY, ACCESS TO ELECTRICITY STANDS AT THE NATIONAL AVERAGE OF **31** PERCENT. THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE. I THEREFORE DIRECT THE MINISTRY OF ENMERGY TO DO MORE TO ENSURE GREATER ACCESS TO ELECTRICITY BY OUR POPULATION COUNTRYWIDE.

MR. SPEAKER,

59. GOVERNMENT IS MAKING STEADY PROGRESS TO MEET THE GROWING DEMAND OF ELECTRICITY WHICH IS EXPECTED TO REACH THE PEAK DEMAND OF **3,000 MEGAWATTS** BY 2021.

PROJECTS THAT PROVIDE A MIX OF ELECTRICITY GENERATION SUCH AS THE PHASE II **300 MEGA-WATT** MAAMBA COAL FIRED PLANT AND THE LUSIWASI LOWER HYDRO POWER PROJECT WHICH IS UPRATING THE POWER PLANT FROM **12 MEGA-WATTS** TO **86 MEGA-WATTS** ARE BEING IMPLEMENTED.

60. OTHERS ARE THE **340 MEGA-WATT** EMCO COAL FIRED PLANT IN SINAZONGWE, **750 MEGA-WATT** KAFUE GORGE LOWER HYDRO POWER STATION, **900 MEGA-WATT** LUAPULA HYDRO POWER SCHEME IN THE MEDIUM AND THE **2,400 MEGA-WATT** BATOKA HYDRO POWER PROJECT IN THE LONG TERM.

MR. SPEAKER,

61. LET US RENEW OUR PLEDGE FOR A BETTER ENERGY SECTOR. LET US BUILD AN ENERGY SECTOR THAT SUPPORTS OUR ECONOMY. LET US PARTICIPATE IN SHAPING THE ZAMBIA WE WANT BY 2030.

MR. SPEAKER,

62. GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO FACILITATING TRADE AND INDUSTRIALISATION AS PART OF THE DIVERSIFICATION OF THE ECONOMY. IN THIS REGARD, WE ARE IMPLEMENTING THE NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL AND THE NATIONAL TRADE POLICIES. THE NATIONAL TRADE POLICY AIMS AT PROMOTING AND STIMULATING A COMPETITIVE TRADE SECTOR, WHILE THE NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL POLICY AIMS AT TRANSFORMING ZAMBIA FROM A PRODUCER AND

EXPORTER OF PRIMARY PRODUCTS TO A NET EXPORTER OF VALUE-ADDED GOODS. FURTHER, THE INDUSTRIAL POLICY ENCOURAGES THE UTILISATION OF LOCAL PRIMARY RESOURCES AND INCREASED CITIZEN PARTICIPATION.

63. THIS POLICY MEASURE WILL ENCOURAGE THE UPTAKE OF OUR LOCAL INNOVATIONS AND HOME GROWN SOLUTIONS IN THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF ENTERPRISES, WITH THE SPIN-OFF EFFECT OF ENHANCED JOB AND INCOME GENERATION OPPORTUNITIES ESPECIALLY FOR OUR YOUNG PEOPLE.

MR. SPEAKER,

64. THE FAVOURABLE POLICIES OF GOVERNMENT ARE FACILITATING PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENTS IN THE COUNTRY. THIS YEAR ALONE, A NUMBER OF COMPANIES HAVE COME ON BOARD. THESE INCLUDE THE NEW **500 MILLION UNITED STATES DOLLAR** CEMENT PLANT IN CHONGWE DISTRICT, CREATING **1,000** JOBS, A **35 MILLION UNITED STATES DOLLAR** FIRST EVER TILE MANUFACTURING PLANT IN LUSAKA, WHICH HAS CREATED OVER **150** JOBS AS WELL AS THE **20 MILLION UNITED STATES DOLLAR** AQUACULTURE INVESTMENT PLANT IN SIAVONGA DISTRICT WHICH IS EMPLOYING OVER **600 PEOPLE**. THE PLANT IS ALSO PROVIDING A MARKET FOR MAIZE, WHEAT AND SOYABEAN FARMERS. OTHER INVESTMENTS ARE FORESTICOL FERTILISERS ZAMBIA LIMITED IN KABWE, SO FAR EMPLOYING OVER **200** PEOPLE AND THE ZAMBIA FERTILISERS MANUFACTURING PLANT IN THE

LUSAKA SOUTH MULTI-FACILITY ECONOMIC ZONE WHICH HAS CREATED **300** JOBS. THE **850** MILLION UNITED STATES DOLLAR INVESTMENT BY CHINA NON-FEROUS METALS AT THE SOUTH ORE DEEP MINING PROJECT IN KALULUSHI HAS RESULTED IN OVER **1000** JOBS FOR OUR PEOPLE.

65. ALL OF THESE INVESTMENTS ARE MAKING USE OF LOCAL RAW MATERIALS AND CREATING JOBS FOR OUR PEOPLE. I AM CONFIDENT THAT WE WILL SEE MORE OF SUCH INVESTMENTS.

MR. SPEAKER,

66. IN THE TRANSPORT SECTOR, THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE **LINK ZAMBIA 8,000 ROAD PROJECT** IS ON-GOING. SO FAR, CONSTRUCTION OF **5,000** KILOMETRES IS AT VARIOUS STAGES OF IMPLEMENTATION ACROSS THE COUNTRY. THESE INCLUDE THE KITWE TO CHINGOLA DUAL CARRIAGE WAY, THE MUMBWA TO ITEZHI-TEZHI ROAD, THE KAWAMBWA TO MUSHOTA ROAD, THE CHAMA TO MATUMBO ROAD AND THE PEDICLE ROAD. THIS PROJECT HAS CREATED OVER **6,000** JOBS SINCE ITS INCEPTION.

MR. SPEAKER,

67. WORK HAS BEEN COMPLETED ON SOME OF THE ROADS SUCH AS THE MBALA-NAKONDE ROAD, LUANGWA BRIDGE TO FEIRA ROAD, THE BOTTOM ROAD FROM NJAMI TO MUNYUMBWE AND THE MONGU-KALABO ROAD. OUR PEOPLE APPRECIATE THE COMING OF THESE

ROADS IN THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS AS THEY HAVE REDUCED TRAVEL TIME AND VEHICLE MAINTENANCE COSTS AS WELL AS INCREASED ACCESS TO MARKETS. MOST OF YOU IN THIS AUGUST HOUSE CAN ATTEST TO THIS REALITY. THIS IS TRULY PUTTING MONEY IN OUR PEOPLE'S POCKETS.

MR. SPEAKER,

68. THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW TERMINAL AT KENNETH KAUNDA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT IN LUSAKA IS PROGRESSING WELL AND NOW STANDS AT ABOVE **75** PERCENT COMPLETION COMPARED TO THE **52** PERCENT WHICH I REPORTED LAST YEAR. THESE WORKS ARE EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED IN 2019. THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE COPPERBELT INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT HAS ALSO COMMENCED AND WORKS ARE AT **13** PERCENT AND COMPLETION IS EXPECTED IN THREE YEARS TIME. ONCE COMPLETED, THE TWO AIRPORTS WILL BOOST TOURISM, TRADE, EMPLOYMENT AND SERVICE DELIVERY TO OUR PEOPLE.

MR. SPEAKER,

69. IN OUR DESIRE TO PROMOTE A SMART ZAMBIA AND ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL COVERAGE IN TELECOMMUNICATIONS COUNTRYWIDE, GOVERNMENT HAS COMMENCED THE INSTALLATION OF COMMUNICATION TOWERS UNDER PHASE II OF THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS TOWERS PROJECT. SO FAR, **318** OUT OF **1,009** TOWERS HAVE BEEN ERECTED. WE EXPECT ALL THE TOWERS TO BE

ERECTED BY 2021. THIS PROJECT IS EXPECTED TO IMPROVE COVERAGE FROM THE CURRENT 84 PERCENT TO 95 PERCENT OF THE COUNTRY ONCE COMPLETED.

70. THE INCREASED NETWORK COVERAGE ARISING FROM THESE TOWERS IS PROMOTING THE USE OF ELECTRONIC PLATFORMS BY THE LARGER POPULATION AS WELL AS ENHANCING EFFICIENCY IN BUSINESS AND GOVERNMENT TRANSACTIONS. USING THE MOBILE PAYMENT SYSTEM, OUR GRANDMOTHER, BELITA, IN JUMBE, IS NOW ABLE TO ACCESS MONEY IN REAL TIME TO ASSIST HER TAKE MAIZE TO NEAREST HAMMER MILL, WHILE MR. SILUMESI IN SHANGOMBO IS ALSO ABLE TO QUICKLY BUY VETERINARY MEDICINE TO VACCINATE HIS ANIMALS, THANKS TO THIS SERVICE.

MR. SPEAKER,

71. WE HAVE MADE PROGRESS IN ROLLING OUT THE DIGITAL MIGRATION PROGRAMME. IN THIS REGARD, **55** OUT OF **63** DIGITAL BROADCASTING TRANSMISSION SITES HAVE BEEN COMMISSIONED THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. THIS HAS IMPROVED ACCESS TO DIGITAL TELEVISION SERVICE THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.

72. AT THE RECENT ZAMBIA AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCIAL SHOW IN LUSAKA, I HAD THE PRIVILEGE TO SEE THE STATE-OF- THE- ART OUTSIDE BROADCASTING VANS FOR THE ZAMBIA NATIONAL BROADCASTING CORPORATION WHICH ARE PART OF THE GREATER

SUCCESS STORY OF OUR DIGITAL MIGRATION PROJECT. ALL OF US TODAY, CAN ATTEST TO THE CLEAR PICTURE WE ARE NOW ENJOYING ON OUR LOCAL TELEVISION SERVICES.

MR. SPEAKER,

73. IN LINE WITH OUR POLICY OF ENCOURAGING PRODUCTION OF LOCAL CONTENT AND JOB CREATION IN THE CREATIVE INDUSTRY, WE HAVE SEEN AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF LOCAL PRODUCTIONS WHICH ARE BEING AIRED ON LOCAL TELEVISION STATIONS AS WELL AS INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS SUCH AS MULTICHOICE AND KWESE. I AM GLAD TO NOTE THAT ZAMBIA HAS BEEN CHOSEN AS A REGIONAL CENTRE FOR THE TRAINING OF PRODUCERS, SCRIPT WRITERS AND ACTORS WHICH WILL BENEFIT MOST OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE WHO CANNOT AFFORD TO TRAIN ABROAD.

MR. SPEAKER,

74. GOVERNMENT, WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA, IS ALSO ROLLING OUT A PROJECT DUBBED, "**ACCESS TO SATELLITE TELEVISION BY 10,000 AFRICAN VILLAGES.**" THROUGH THE PROJECT, 500 **SELECTED** VILLAGES IN ZAMBIA WILL BE CONNECTED TO SATELLITE TELEVISION. THIS IS A FURTHER PRACTICAL BENEFIT OF OUR DIGITAL MIGRATION PROGRAMME.

75. THE PROJECT HAS ALREADY BEEN LAUNCHED IN EASTERN, WESTERN AND LUAPULA PROVINCES AND WILL BE ROLLED OUT TO THE REST OF THE PROVINCES BY MARCH, 2019. FOR OUR PEOPLE, THIS IS NOT A PROMISSORY NOTE. IT IS ALREADY A REALITY AT SCHOOLS SUCH AS KEFULWA, KABUTA AND KANYEMBO IN LUAPULA PROVINCE AND SOME SELECTED VILLAGES AROUND THEM.

MR. SPEAKER,

76. MR. CHARLES TEMBO OF KAWAZA COMPOUND IN SINDA DISTRICT SPOKE FOR MANY WHEN HE SAID AND I QUOTE, **“BEING ABLE TO WATCH TV IN MY GRASS-THATCHED HOUSE IS LIKE A DREAM COME TRUE. I AM NOW ABLE TO SEE WHAT IS HAPPENING IN OTHER PARTS OF THE COUNTRY AND FOLLOW PROGRAMMES THAT EDUCATE ME ON MODERN FARMING METHODS AND HOW TO IMPROVE MY YIELDS,”** END OF QUOTE.

77. THIS IS THE KIND OF EMPOWERMENT OF OUR CITIZENS THAT GOVERNMENT WANTS TO SEE BY TAKING INFORMATION TO WHERE OUR PEOPLE ARE. ACCESS TO INFORMATION MUST AND SHOULD NOT BE A PRIVILEGE OF A FEW. IT IS AS MUCH A HUMAN RIGHT AS THE RIGHT TO SAFE AND CLEAN WATER OR AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE. WE ARE, INDEED, MOVING TOWARDS A SMART ZAMBIA.

POVERTY AND VULNERABILITY REDUCTION

MR. SPEAKER,

78. THE SOCIAL CASH TRANSFER PROGRAMME HAS PROVED TO BE EFFECTIVE IN CONTRIBUTING TO POVERTY REDUCTION AS WELL AS INCOME REDISTRIBUTION, ESPECIALLY IN THE RURAL COMMUNITIES WHERE POVERTY IS VERY HIGH. THE PROGRAMME IS BEING SCALED UP TO REACH A TOTAL OF **700,000** BENEFICIARY HOUSEHOLDS COUNTRYWIDE BY THE END OF THIS YEAR. CURRENTLY, **632,020** HOUSEHOLDS ARE BENEFITING.

79. TO ENSURE FOOD SECURITY FOR VULNERABLE BUT VIABLE POOR HOUSEHOLDS, GOVERNMENT WILL, IN THE 2018/2019 FARMING SEASON, INCREASE THE COVERAGE OF THE FOOD SECURITY PACK PROGRAMME FROM **27,650** BENEFICIARIES IN THE PREVIOUS FARMING SEASON TO **80,000**. THE **27,650** FARMERS ARE EXPECTED TO PRODUCE **41,475** METRIC TONNES OF MAIZE AND **706** METRIC TONNES OF LEGUMES.

MR. SPEAKER,

80. THROUGH THE GIRL'S EDUCATION AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND LIVELIHOOD PROJECT, GOVERNMENT IS SUPPORTING VULNERABLE WOMEN AND GIRLS.

81. IN 2017, **12,445** VULNERABLE WOMEN IN **11** DISTRICTS WERE EMPOWERED WITH LIFE AND BUSINESS SKILLS AS WELL AS PROVIDED WITH GRANTS OF **K2,000** EACH. BY THE END OF THIS YEAR, AN ADDITIONAL **21,000** WOMEN IN **31** DISTRICTS WILL BE SUPPORTED.

82. FURTHER, GOVERNMENT IS SUPPORTING **15,082** GIRLS AGED BETWEEN **14** AND **18** YEARS TO BE RETAINED IN SCHOOL.

MR. SPEAKER,

83. GOVERNMENT IS EQUALLY COMMITTED TO THE PROMOTION OF THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES. IN THIS REGARD, WE HAVE CONTINUED TO MAINSTREAM DISABILITY IN ALL OUR PROGRAMMES. FOR INSTANCE, WE ARE PROMOTING THE INCLUSION OF SIGN LANGUAGE AND BRAILLE IN OUR VARIOUS INSTITUTIONS, EXPANDED USE OF RAMPS AND ELEVATORS IN PUBLIC BUILDINGS. WE HAVE ALSO WAIVED DUTY ON THE IMPORTATION OF MODIFIED VEHICLES FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES. I, THEREFORE, CALL UPON THE PRIVATE SECTOR, FAITH BASED ORGANISATIONS AND THE CIVIL SOCIETY TO ALSO MAINSTREAM DISABILITY IN ALL THEIR PROGRAMMES.

MR. SPEAKER,

84. I AM HAPPY TO INFORM THIS AUGUST HOUSE THAT THE YOUTH RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMME WHICH STARTED AT THE FORMER MWANGE REFUGEE CAMP IN MPOROKOSO DISTRICT OF NORTHERN

PROVINCE IS DOING WELL. AS AT 30TH JUNE, 2018, A TOTAL OF **230** YOUTHS HAD BEEN RESETTLED AT THE CENTRE AND WERE INVOLVED IN VARIOUS ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES. THESE INCLUDED CROP PRODUCTION AND ANIMAL HUSBANDRY. THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT MWANGE YOUTH RESETTLEMENT CENTRE EMERGED AS THE BEST AGRICULTURE CAMP IN NORTHERN PROVINCE IN THE 2017/2018 FARMING SEASON.

85. THIS IS A CLEAR DEMONSTRATION THAT GIVEN THE NECESSARY SUPPORT, THE YOUTH ARE CAPABLE OF BEING PRODUCTIVE AND AT THE CENTRE OF DRIVING OUR ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION AGENDA. I, THEREFORE, URGE THE YOUTH TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMME TO IMPROVE THEIR LIVES.

MR. SPEAKER

86. TO FURTHER PROMOTE OUR INCLUSIVE AGENDA, GOVERNMENT HAS EXTENDED SOCIAL SECURITY COVERAGE TO THE INFORMAL SECTOR THROUGH THE NATIONAL PENSION SCHEME AUTHORITY, NAPSA. THIS PENSION SCHEME IS NOW COVERING DOMESTIC WORKERS, BUS AND TAXI DRIVERS, ARTISTS, MARKETEERS, TRADERS AND SMALL SCALE FARMERS.

87. I URGE OUR PEOPLE IN THE INFORMAL SECTOR TO JOIN AVAILABLE SOCIAL SECURITY PROGRAMMES TO AVOID DESTITUTION IN OLD AGE. FURTHER, I AM ENCOURAGING OUR PEOPLE TO TAKE UP

INSURANCE POLICIES TO COVER THEIR BUSINESS VENTURES AND THEIR LIVES IN THE EVENT OF CALAMITIES. WE ALL NEED TO ASSIST IN EDUCATING AND ENCOURAGING OUR PEOPLE ON THE IMPORTANCE AND BENEFITS OF TAKING UP THESE POLICIES. INDEED, THERE IS HOPE FOR EVERYONE WHEN WE DO THE RIGHT THING.

REDUCING DEVELOPMENTAL INEQUALITIES

MR. SPEAKER,

88. OUR COUNTRY HAS DISTURBING STATISTICS ON INEQUALITY. THIS SITUATION CHALLENGES US TO DOUBLE OUR EFFORTS TO BRIDGE THE INEQUALITY GAP.

89. CONTINUATION OF IMPLEMENTATION OF NECESSARY POLICY INTERVENTIONS IN THE CRITICAL SECTORS OF EDUCATION, HEALTH, AGRICULTURE, ENERGY, COMMUNICATIONS, WATER, SANITATION, ROADS AND OTHER ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SECTORS IS KEY. THIS INCLUDES IMPLEMENTING PROGRAMMES AIMED AT TAKING DEVELOPMENT TO RURAL AREAS. THIS IS BEING DONE THROUGH, BUT NOT LIMITED TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW DISTRICTS IN RURAL AREAS AND PROMOTION OF INDUSTRIALISATION ACROSS THE LENGTH AND BREADTH OF OUR COUNTRY.

MR. SPEAKER,

90. TO REDUCE HIGHER INCOME INEQUALITIES, GOVERNMENT IS SUPPORTING INVESTMENTS IN RURAL AREAS THROUGH PROMOTION OF VALUE CHAIN DEVELOPMENT.

91. TO DERIVE MAXIMUM BENEFITS FROM THE SECTOR-SPECIFIC INTERVENTIONS AIMED AT BRIDGING THE INEQUALITY GAP, GOVERNMENT IS ENCOURAGING LOCAL COMMUNITIES TO FORM COOPERATIVES. THIS WILL HELP INTEGRATE THEM INTO VARIOUS VALUE CHAINS. AMONG THE VALUE CHAINS USING THE COOPERATIVE MODEL ARE THE CASHEW NUT PROJECT IN WESTERN PROVINCE AND THE CASSAVA VALUE CHAINS IN NORTH-WESTERN, NORTHERN AND LUAPULA PROVINCES.

MR. SPEAKER,

92. TO ENHANCE THE WELFARE OF THE MAJORITY OF ZAMBIANS, WE WILL CONTINUE WITH INVESTMENTS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE SUCH AS ROADS, SCHOOLS AND HOSPITALS. THIS WILL SECURE EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF THE BENEFITS OF ECONOMIC GROWTH. OUR RESOLVE IN THIS DIRECTION IS ATTESTED TO BY THE VARIOUS PROJECTS GOING ON THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.

93. TO PROVIDE EASY ACCESS TO MARKETS FOR THE FARMING COMMUNITY IN THE HARD-TO-REACH AREAS, WE HAVE ALSO PRIORITISED THE REHABILITATION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE PRIMARY FEEDER ROAD NETWORKS. THIS WILL MITIGATE THE PERENNIAL POST-HARVEST LOSSES SUFFERED BY FARMERS.

MR. SPEAKER,

94. IT WOULD APPEAR THAT DEVELOPMENT INEQUALITY HAS A FEMALE FACE. THIS IS BECAUSE WOMEN AND GIRLS CONTINUE TO BEAR THE UNEQUAL BURDEN OF POVERTY AND FACE CHALLENGES IN ACCESSING JUSTICE, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES. THIS IS EXACERBATED BY SOME DEEP-ROOTED CULTURAL AND TRADITIONAL PRACTICES THAT PROMOTE MALE DOMINANCE AND THE SUBORDINATION OF WOMEN AND GIRLS.

95. GOVERNMENT IS, THEREFORE, COMMITTED TO PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY. THE FORMER UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY GENERAL, THE LATE MR. KOFI ANNAN, MAY HIS SOUL REST IN PEACE, WAS RIGHT TO SAY AND I QUOTE, “**GENDER EQUALITY IS MORE THAN A GOAL IN ITSELF. IT IS A PRE-CONDITION FOR MEETING THE CHALLENGE OF REDUCING POVERTY, PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND BUILDING GOOD GOVERNANCE**”, END OF QUOTE.

96. IN THIS REGARD, GOVERNMENT IS IMPLEMENTING MULTI-PRONGED STRATEGIES THAT TACKLE THE ROOT CAUSES OF GENDER

INEQUALITY SUCH AS ACCESS TO EDUCATION, HEALTH, NUTRITION AND JUSTICE. WE ARE ALSO WORKING WITH TRADITIONAL AUTHORITIES TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY, AS MOST INEQUALITIES AFFECT RURAL WOMEN AND GIRLS.

ENHANCING HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

MR. SPEAKER,

97. IN PURSUIT OF OUR DESIRE TO ATTAIN OUR AMBITIOUS **VISION 2030**, WE HAVE CONTINUED TO SET AND PURSUE CLEAR PRIORITIES IN THE HEALTH AND EDUCATION SECTORS IN RESPONSE TO THE RISING EXPECTATIONS OF OUR PEOPLE AND THE RAPID TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGES.

MR. SPEAKER,

98. IN THE TERTIARY EDUCATION SUB-SECTOR, GOVERNMENT HAS OPERATIONALISED THE KAPASA MAKASA, KWAME NKRUMAH, MUKUBA AND CHALIMBANA UNIVERSITIES FOR INCREASED ACCESS. THE CONSTRUCTION OF FREDERICK TITUS JACOB CHILUBA UNIVERSITY IN MANSA, KING LEWANIKA UNIVERSITY IN MONGU AND KASAMA UNIVERSITY IN KASAMA HAS COMMENCED. THESE UNIVERSITIES, ONCE COMPLETED, WILL PROVIDE MORE THAN **4,000** ADDITIONAL LEARNING PLACES.

99. ACCESS TO EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION HAS BEEN ENHANCED. STUDENT ENROLMENT IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES STOOD AT **58,442** IN 2017 FROM **49,236** IN 2016. THE ENROLMENT OF FEMALE STUDENTS INCREASED FROM **21,373** IN 2016 TO **26,845** IN 2017.

100. THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN TECHNICAL EDUCATION, VOCATIONAL AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP TRAINING (TEVET) INSTITUTIONS ALSO INCREASED FROM **36,575** IN 2016 TO **39,802** IN 2017. THE NUMBER OF FEMALE STUDENTS ENROLLED IN 2017 WAS **11,669** FROM **9,958** IN 2016. CONSTRUCTION OF SEVEN TEVET INSTITUTIONS, NAMELY ISOKA, KALABO, SESHEKE, MPOROKOSO, MUMBWA, LUNDAZI AND MWENSE IS PROGRESSING WELL AND NEARING COMPLETION.

MR. SPEAKER,

101. I HAVE BEEN FOLLOWING WITH KEEN INTEREST THE ADVANCEMENT OF SOME OF THE STUDENTS COMING OUT OF OUR TRADES TRAINING INSTITUTES AND YOUTH RESOURCE CENTRES LOCATED IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE COUNTRY.

102. SOME HAVE BECOME SUCCESSFUL EMPLOYERS OF FELLOW YOUTHS. SUCH IS THE STORY OF FREDSON KASONGO, FORMER STUDENT OF MUFUMBWE YOUTH RESOURCE CENTRE WHO IS NOW A CONTRACTOR IN SOLWEZI AND HAS ENGAGED **360** WORKERS. THERE IS ALSO CAROL LUBEMBA, A FORMER STUDENT OF LUSAKA YOUTH RESOURCE CENTRE, WHO NOW RUNS A RESTAURANT AND HAS

EMPLOYED **SIX** WORKERS ON PERMANENT BASIS. THESE YOUTHS ARE A SHINING EXAMPLE OF WHAT CAN HAPPEN WHEN A YOUNG PERSON IS GIVEN A SKILL.

MR. SPEAKER,

103. EFFECTIVE REGULATION IS CRITICAL TO ENSURING PROVISION OF QUALITY TERTIARY EDUCATION. TO THIS EFFECT, GOVERNMENT IS REVIEWING THE HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY AND THE TECHNICAL EDUCATION, VOCATIONAL AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP TRAINING (TEVET) POLICY TO PROVIDE A FRAMEWORK FOR ASSURING QUALITY IN TERTIARY EDUCATION.

MR. SPEAKER

104. GOVERNMENT HAS CONTINUED TO PROVIDE LOANS AND SCHOLARSHIPS TO LEARNERS AT ALL LEVELS OF OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM. IN 2017, A TOTAL OF **25,128** UNIVERSITY AND TEVET STUDENTS WERE SUPPORTED UNDER THE LOANS AND SCHOLARSHIPS BOARD, THE TEVET BURSARY, THE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FUND AND THE SUPPORT TO SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY PROJECT. THE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FUND HAS ALSO BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN FINANCING THE REVIEW OF OVER **79** CURRICULA IN THE LAST YEAR TO ALIGN THEM TO INDUSTRY AND THE NATIONAL DIVERSIFICATION AGENDA.

MR. SPEAKER,

105. IN THE AREA OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, WE ARE MAKING PROGRESS TOWARDS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CENTRE FOR NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY. THIS CENTRE IS NOT A NUCLEAR POWER PLANT BUT A CENTRE FOR RESEARCH IN NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY. ONCE OPERATIONAL, THE CENTRE WILL CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS ENHANCED TREATMENT OF CANCER, IRRADIATION OF CERTAIN AGRICULTURAL AND MINERAL PRODUCTS FOR EXPORT AS WELL AS OTHER INDUSTRIAL USES. THIS WILL ALSO CREATE A CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE WHICH WILL CONTRIBUTE TO ACADEMIC TOURISM AS WELL AS CREATE JOBS.

106. IN THIS REGARD, THE CENTRE WILL CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS IMPROVED REVENUES REALISED FROM EXPORTS AND MAKE ZAMBIA A NUCLEAR SCIENCE REGIONAL HUB. TO FACILITATE THE SEAMLESS RUNNING OF THE CENTRE BY ZAMBIANS, A NUMBER OF YOUNG ZAMBIANS ARE ALREADY UNDERGOING TRAINING IN NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND RESEARCH. THIS EFFORT IS PART OF OUR AGENDA TO ACHIEVE A SMART ZAMBIA AS WE MOVE TOWARDS ATTAINING VISION 2030.

MR. SPEAKER,

107. IN GENERAL EDUCATION, A TOTAL OF **3,148** TEACHERS WERE RECRUITED AND DEPLOYED TO SCHOOLS ACROSS THE COUNTRY IN 2017 TOWARDS OUR TARGET OF **55,000** TEACHERS OVER THE NEXT **10** YEARS. AN ADDITIONAL **2,000** TEACHERS WILL BE RECRUITED BEFORE

THE END OF THIS YEAR. FURTHER, **2,939** TEACHERS ARE BEING SUPPORTED TO UPGRADE THEIR QUALIFICATIONS UNDER THE FAST-TRACK TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME.

MR. SPEAKER,

108. TO MEET INCREASING DEMAND FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL EDUCATION, GOVERNMENT IS BUILDING NEW SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND UPGRADING PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN NEEDY AREAS. SO FAR **115** SCHOOLS ARE BEING BUILT, OUT OF WHICH **62** HAVE BEEN COMPLETED. IN ADDITION, **82** SECONDARY SCHOOLS ARE BEING CONSTRUCTED THROUGH COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION. FURTHER, **1,155** COMMUNITY SCHOOLS WERE UPGRADED INTO PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN 2017. IN ADDITION, **477** PRIMARY SCHOOLS WERE UPGRADED INTO SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

MR. SPEAKER,

109. THE PROVISION OF QUALITY EDUCATION REMAINS IMPORTANT TO GOVERNMENT. IN THIS REGARD, THE TEACHING COUNCIL OF ZAMBIA IS ENSURING THAT ONLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS ARE ENGAGED TO TEACH IN OUR SCHOOLS. FURTHER, GOVERNMENT IS WORKING TOWARDS BRINGING THE TEACHER-PUPIL RATIO TO THE ACCEPTABLE STANDARD OF ONE TO FORTY AND ONE TO THIRTY-FIVE FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS, RESPECTIVELY.

MR. SPEAKER,

110. LET ME NOW TURN TO THE HEALTH SECTOR. WE HAVE CONTINUED TO RECORD REMARKABLE SUCCESS IN PRIMARY HEALTH CARE. IN THIS CONNECTION, IMMUNISATION COVERAGE INCREASED FROM **92** PERCENT IN 2017 TO **94** PERCENT IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF THIS YEAR. THE NATIONAL OUTTURN ON INSTITUTIONAL MATERNAL DEATHS REDUCED TO **138** DEATHS PER **100,000** LIVE BIRTHS IN 2017 FROM **149** DEATHS PER **100,000** LIVE BIRTHS IN 2016. THE BENEFITS OF THESE INTERVENTIONS ARE EVIDENT IN LIVES SAVED.

MR. SPEAKER,

111. GOVERNMENT IS DETERMINED TO MAKE ZAMBIA MALARIA FREE. INTERVENTIONS BEING UNDERTAKEN INCLUDE INDOOR RESIDUAL SPRAYING AND MASS DISTRIBUTION OF LONG LASTING INSECTICIDE-TREATED MOSQUITO NETS. THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE PROTECTED THROUGH INDOOR RESIDUAL SPRAYING INCREASED FROM **6.7** MILLION IN 2016 TO **7.8** MILLION IN 2017 WHILE **10.1** MILLION MOSQUITO NETS WERE DISTRIBUTED DURING THE 2017/2018 MASS DISTRIBUTION EXERCISE.

MR. SPEAKER,

112. THE UNIVERSAL ROUTINE HIV TESTING, COUNSELLING AND TREATMENT, WHICH I LAUNCHED LAST YEAR, HAS RESULTED IN **20** PERCENT INCREASE IN THE HIV TESTING UPTAKE AND A **4** PERCENT

INCREASE IN TREATMENT UPTAKE WHILE THE TB TREATMENT SUCCESS RATE INCREASED TO **89** PERCENT BY 2017. THIS IS IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE AND AVERTING PREVENTABLE DEATHS.

113. I, NOTE WITH CONCERN, HOWEVER, THAT OUR YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE BEEN LEFT BEHIND. WHEREAS WE HAVE REACHED OVER **80** PERCENT OF ADULTS IN NEED OF ANTI-RETROVIRAL THERAPY, WE HAVE ONLY REACHED HALF OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE. IT IS OUR DUTY TO ENCOURAGE OUR YOUNG PEOPLE TO ACCESS THESE SERVICES.

MR. SPEAKER,

114. TO BRING MEDICINES CLOSER TO WHERE THEY ARE NEEDED AND AVOID WASTAGE IN THE CENTRAL STORAGE FACILITIES, GOVERNMENT IS CONSTRUCTING MEDICINE STORAGE FACILITIES. I AM PLEASED TO INFORM THIS AUGUST HOUSE THAT CHIPATA, CHOMA, MONGU AND NDOLA HUBS ARE NOW OPERATIONAL. OTHER STORAGE HUBS ARE UNDER CONSTRUCTION IN STRATEGIC REGIONS ACROSS THE COUNTRY. VERY SOON, MANSA AND MPIKA WILL COME ON BOARD.

115. FURTHER, MEDICAL STORES LIMITED IS BEING UPGRADED TO A STATE-OF-THE-ART WAREHOUSING FACILITY FOR PHARMACEUTICAL MANAGEMENT.

MR. SPEAKER,

116. GOVERNMENT HAS CONTINUED TO ADDRESS THE SHORTAGE OF HEALTH PERSONNEL AT ALL LEVELS OF CARE. SO FAR, **15,376** HEALTH PERSONNEL HAVE BEEN RECRUITED AND DEPLOYED IN VARIOUS HEALTH FACILITIES COUNTRYWIDE BETWEEN 2016 AND THIS YEAR. SPECIAL ATTENTION HAS BEEN GIVEN TO THE RECRUITMENT OF MEDICAL DOCTORS, NURSES AND MIDWIVES.

117. WE WILL CONTINUE TO WORK TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE TARGET OF RECRUITING **30,000** HEALTH WORKERS BY 2021 AND ENSURE THAT ALL HEALTH FACILITIES HAVE THE APPROPRIATE AND ADEQUATE STAFF-MIX DEPLOYED TO OFFER QUALITY HEALTH SERVICES TO OUR PEOPLE.

MR. SPEAKER,

118. TO ENSURE THE AVAILABILITY OF SKILLED HEALTH PERSONNEL, GOVERNMENT HAS ESTABLISHED THE LEVY MWANAWASA TEACHING HOSPITAL AND EMBARKED ON UPGRADING IT TO A STRATEGIC NATIONAL TRAINING HUB. FURTHER, THE NDOLA CENTRAL HOSPITAL HAS BEEN UPGRADED INTO A UNIVERSITY TEACHING HOSPITAL. THIS ADDS MORE LEARNING PLACES TO WHAT IS AVAILABLE AT THE UNIVERSITY TEACHING HOSPITAL IN LUSAKA. THIS ALSO CREATES INCREASED OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEDICAL AND ACADEMIC TOURISM.

119. GOVERNMENT HAS ALSO COMMENCED A SPECIALIST TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR HEALTH WORKERS IN, AMONG OTHERS,

ONCOLOGY, PUBLIC HEALTH AND TRAUMA. CURRENTLY, **215** DOCTORS ARE ALREADY IN TRAINING AGAINST A TARGET OF **500** SPECIALISTS BY 2021. THIS TRAINING IS BEING OFFERED AT VARIOUS INSTITUTIONS WITHIN THE COUNTRY, SUCH AS UNIVERSITY TEACHING HOSPITAL, NDOLA TEACHING HOSPITAL, LIVINGSTONE TEACHING HOSPITAL AND KITWE TEACHING HOSPITAL.

MR. SPEAKER,

120. CLEAN AND SAFE DRINKING WATER IS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT. HENCE, WE HAVE TARGETED TO INCREASE ACCESS TO CLEAN AND SAFE DRINKING WATER FROM THE CURRENT **65** PERCENT TO **85** PERCENT AND ACCESS TO SANITATION FROM **25** PERCENT TO **30** PERCENT BY 2021. THE ATTAINMENT OF THESE TARGETS WILL BE NECESSARY BUILDING BLOCKS TOWARDS THE REALISATION OF VISION 2030.

121. ACCORDINGLY, A NUMBER OF INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS ARE UNDER IMPLEMENTATION IN ALL THE TEN PROVINCES OF OUR COUNTRY. THESE INCLUDE THE LUSAKA WATER SANITATION AND DRAINAGE PROJECT, LUSAKA SANITATION PROGRAMME, THE KAZUNGULA EMERGENCY WATER SUPPLY PROJECT IN MATINANGALA, THE MUFUMBWE WATER SUPPLY PROJECT AND THE MWANDI WATER SUPPLY PROJECT.

122. OTHERS ARE THE KAFUBU WATER AND SEWERAGE PROGRAMME, THE NEW SERENJE WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION PROJECT, AND THE WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION PROJECT IN NYIMBA EAST. UNDER PHASE ONE OF THE SIX TOWNS WATER PROJECT, KAWAMBWA AND MANSA WERE COVERED, WHILE PHASE TWO OF THE PROJECT WILL COVER MPIKA, MBALA AND KASAMA.

123. WE HAVE ALSO CONTINUED TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO SAFE AND CLEAN DRINKING WATER IN RURAL AREAS THROUGH CONSTRUCTION OF BOREHOLES AND WATER POINTS. SO FAR, **735** BOREHOLES HAVE BEEN CONSTRUCTED THIS YEAR COVERING EASTERN, SOUTHERN, WESTERN AND NORTHERN PROVINCES.

MR. SPEAKER,

124. OUR PEOPLE NEED MORE THAN HOPE IN THE AREA OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT. THEY NEED THE SERVICES OF THEIR GOVERNMENT AND THAT IS WHAT WE ARE DELIVERING.

CREATING A CONDUCTIVE GOVERNANCE ENVIRONMENT FOR A DIVERSIFIED AND INCLUSIVE ECONOMY

MR. SPEAKER,

125. A CONDUCTIVE GOVERNANCE ENVIRONMENT CENTRED ON TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY, INCLUSIVE DEMOCRATIC

SYSTEM OF GOVERNANCE, THE RULE OF LAW, HUMAN RIGHTS AND CONSTITUTIONALISM, ARE IMPERATIVE TO ANY NATION.

126. LET ME NOW SHARE WITH THE HOUSE THE PROGRESS MADE SO FAR AND THE OUTLOOK IN THIS AREA.

MR. SPEAKER,

127. IN LINE WITH OUR VISION 2030 AND OUR QUEST TO ACHIEVE A SMART ZAMBIA, GOVERNMENT IS MODERNISING THE PUBLIC SERVICE. IN THIS REGARD, WE HAVE MADE PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE E-GOVERNMENT SYSTEM.

128. AN ELECTRONIC PAYMENT SYSTEM FOR PUBLIC SERVICES HAS SINCE BEEN INTRODUCED TO ENHANCE TRANSPARENCY AND MINIMISE LEAKAGES IN THE COLLECTION OF NON-TAX REVENUES. FOR INSTANCE, THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ONLINE CONSOLIDATED IMMIGRATION SYSTEM HAS RESULTED IN IMPROVED REVENUES OF OVER **ONE MILLION** UNITED STATES DOLLARS WITHIN FIVE MONTHS OF ITS INTRODUCTION. IN ADDITION, THE SYSTEM HAS REDUCED THE COST AND TIME OF DOING BUSINESS.

129. FURTHER, GOVERNMENT HAS FULLY IMPLEMENTED THE ELECTRONIC CABINET SYSTEM IN ALL THE **29** MINISTRIES AND **10** PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION OFFICES. THIS HAS RESULTED IN OVER **85** PERCENT COST SAVINGS FOR GOVERNMENT. THIS INNOVATION IS

ALSO CONTRIBUTING TOWARDS PROMOTING A GREEN ECONOMY. IN ADDITION, THE INTRODUCTION OF THE GOVERNMENT WIDE-AREA NETWORK HAS RESULTED IN THE REDUCTION IN PAYMENTS FOR INTERNET SERVICES FROM **K62** MILLION TO **K28** MILLION, A SAVING OF **K34** MILLION.

130. GOVERNMENT HAS ALSO IMPLEMENTED AN ELECTRONIC PAYSIP SYSTEM WHICH HAS RESULTED IN SAVINGS OF **K72** MILLION SINCE ITS INTRODUCTION IN AUGUST LAST YEAR.

131. IN 2019, GOVERNMENT PLANS TO IMPLEMENT AN ELECTRONIC PARLIAMENT SYSTEM TO ENHANCE THE INTERFACE BETWEEN THE LEGISLATURE AND THE EXECUTIVE.

MR. SPEAKER,

132. GOVERNMENT HAS EXPANDED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR-GENERAL IN ORDER TO ENABLE IT DISCHARGE ITS CONSTITUTIONAL MANDATE WHICH INCLUDES AUDIT OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES. THIS WILL STRENGTHEN TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN VIEW OF THE DEVOLUTION OF FUNCTIONS TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES.

MR. SPEAKER,

133. THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION REMAINS A PRIORITY FOR THIS GOVERNMENT. TO THIS END, THE REVIEW OF THE NATIONAL ANTI-

CORRUPTION POLICY OF 2009 HAS BEEN UNDERTAKEN. THE NEW POLICY TO BE DEVELOPED WILL ADDRESS CORRUPTION IN A HOLISTIC MANNER AT THREE LEVELS, NAMELY, LEGAL, INSTITUTIONAL AND SOCIAL.

134. THIS APPROACH WILL ENTAIL COLLECTIVE ACTION FROM THE CITIZENS, PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTORS TO PROMOTE INTEGRITY AND TRANSPARENCY IN OUR AFFAIRS. IT WILL ALSO REQUIRE STRENGTHENING OF EXISTING INSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL FRAMEWORKS. I CALL UPON ALL OF US TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW POLICY ONCE IT IS DEVELOPED.

135. WE ALL HAVE A PATRIOTIC DUTY NOT JUST TO EXPRESS OUTRAGE AGAINST CORRUPTION, BUT TO DO MORE TO COMBAT THE SCOURGE. BUT THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION MUST BE DONE IN AN HONEST MANNER, DEVOID OF THE NARROW AND SELFISH INTERESTS CALCULATED TO MALIGN OTHERS SIMPLY BECAUSE ONE HAS THE PLATFORM TO DO SO. THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION MUST BE PROSECUTED WITH NOBLE INTENTIONS TO MAKE OUR SOCIETY BETTER.

136. THE SCREAMING HEADLINES OF CORRUPTION PROPAGANDA MAY SUCCEED TO MALIGN SOMEONE BUT THEY ACHIEVE NOTHING IN TERMS OF UPLIFTING THE LIVES OF THE POOR AND INDIGENT OF OUR SOCIETY, THE VERY PEOPLE WE SWORE TO SERVE AND PROTECT.

137. LET US THEREFORE COME TO A COMMON CAUSE THAT THE SCOURGE IS NOT JUST CRIMINAL, BUT MORALLY REPREHENSIBLE TOO. AND SO LET US AGREE ON A GENUINE LEGAL AND AWARENESS RESPONSE TO THE PROBLEM, NOT THE OFTEN BASELESS NAME-CALLING WHICH ADDS NOTHING TO THE CRUSADE BUT SIMPLY POLARISES OUR SOCIETY BETWEEN THE ACCUSED AND THE ACCUSERS.

138. LET US FOCUS ON THE BROAD-BASED NATIONAL AGENDA THAT SPEAKS TO INTERESTS OF ALL ZAMBIANS. VICTORY IN ANY NATIONAL CRUSADE DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN DEFEAT OF ONE SECTION OF OUR SOCIETY. IN THIS REGARD, VICTORY CAN ONLY BE ACHIEVED THROUGH A COLLECTIVE DESIRED GOAL THAT BENEFITS THE GREATEST MAJORITY OF OUR PEOPLE.

MR. SPEAKER,

139. IN OUR DESIRE TO ACHIEVE THE TRANSFORMATIONAL AGENDA, GOVERNMENT HAS, AMONG OTHER THINGS, CONTINUED TO RE-ALIGN ITS INSTITUTIONS. THIS RE-ALIGNMENT IS AIMED AT IMPROVING BUSINESS OPERATIONS, ENHANCING SERVICE DELIVERY AND BRINGING ABOUT GREATER PARTICIPATION OF OUR PEOPLE IN DECISION MAKING.

140. GOVERNMENT IS MAKING STEADY PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL DECENTRALISATION POLICY. THE OBJECTIVE OF THE POLICY IS TO DEVOLVE SOME CENTRAL

GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONS TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES WITH MATCHING RESOURCES.

141. SO FAR, FUNCTIONS SUCH AS PRIMARY EDUCATION, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, AGRICULTURE EXTENSION SERVICES AND PRIMARY HEALTH CARE ARE BEING DEVOLVED TO ALL LOCAL AUTHORITIES. FURTHER, ISSUANCE OF BIRTH AND DEATH CERTIFICATES HAS BEEN DECENTRALISED TO MOST OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES. THIS MEANS THAT OUR PEOPLE DO NOT NEED TO TRAVEL TO PROVINCIAL CENTRES TO PROCESS THESE DOCUMENTS THEREBY SAVING MONEY ON TRAVEL AS WELL AS TIME FOR OTHER PRODUCTIVE ENGAGEMENTS.

142. THE TRANSFER OF PERSONNEL FROM THE RESPECTIVE SERVICE COMMISSIONS TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES HAS COMMENCED WITH CHIBOMBO DISTRICT.

MR. SPEAKER,

143. EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE DELIVERY SHOULD BE THE HALLMARK OF DECENTRALISATION. I EXPECT EVERY PUBLIC SERVANT FROM THE DOCTOR, NURSE AND PORTER AT CHOMA GENERAL HOSPITAL, TO THE REGISTRATION OFFICER IN LUKULU DISTRICT, THE TEACHER IN KABOMPO, THE PONTOON OPERATOR AT KAZUNGULA, THE AGRICULTURE EXTENSION OFFICER IN IKELENGE DISTRICT AND THE

CONSTABLE AT KANYAMA POLICE POST TO UPHOLD THE HIGHEST STANDARDS AND ETHICS IN THE PERFORMANCE OF THEIR DUTIES.

MR. SPEAKER,

144. IN OUR QUEST TO PROMOTE A CULTURE OF TOLERANCE AND NATIONAL UNITY, GOVERNMENT HAS CONTINUED TO ENGAGE POLITICAL PARTIES AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS. THESE ENGAGEMENTS HAVE BEGUN TO YIELD SOME POSITIVE RESULTS WITH POLITICAL YOUTH LEADERS AGREEING THAT THERE IS MORE THAT BINDS US TOGETHER AS ZAMBIANS THAN WHAT DIVIDES US. THIS IS IN LINE WITH OUR IDEALS AS A CHRISTIAN NATION AND INDEED OUR NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES.

145. GOVERNMENT REMAINS COMMITTED TO AMENDING THE PUBLIC ORDER ACT CAP 113 OF THE LAWS OF ZAMBIA.

MR. SPEAKER,

146. TO IMPROVE SERVICE DELIVERY IN THE AREA OF JUSTICE, GOVERNMENT WILL IMPLEMENT AN AUTOMATED CASE-FLOW MANAGEMENT SYSTEM. THE SYSTEM WILL LINK THE ZAMBIA POLICE SERVICE, NATIONAL PROSECUTIONS AUTHORITY, JUDICIARY, LEGAL AID BOARD AND ZAMBIA CORRECTIONAL SERVICES. IT IS ENVISAGED THAT THE SYSTEM WILL MAKE A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS ADDRESSING CHALLENGES IN DISPENSING JUSTICE. THESE INCLUDE LOSS OF CASE RECORDS AND BACKLOGS AS WELL AS CONGESTION

IN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES. THE CASE-FLOW MANAGEMENT SYSTEM WILL ALSO ENHANCE EFFICIENCY AND IMPROVE TRANSPARENCY.

147. GOVERNMENT IS ALSO COLLABORATING WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO CONSTRUCT NEW AND MODERN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES TO ADDRESS OVERCROWDING OF INMATES. THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE TWO CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES UNDER THE PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP IN MWEMBESHI WITH A HOLDING CAPACITY OF **3,200** INMATES HAVE REACHED **70** PERCENT COMPLETION AND ARE EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED BY END OF 2019.

MR. SPEAKER,

148. WE CANNOT DISCUSS THE STRENGTHENING OF OUR GOVERNANCE SYSTEM WITHOUT REFERRING TO OUR NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES. IN THIS REGARD, GOVERNMENT IS CONTINUING TO INTEGRATE THE NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES INTO THE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA AND PROVISION OF SERVICES. I URGE ALL STAKEHOLDERS AT COMMUNITY, DISTRICT, PROVINCIAL AND NATIONAL LEVELS TO TAKE NECESSARY STEPS TO INTEGRATE OUR NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES, IN ALL ASPECTS OF LIFE.

MR. SPEAKER,

149. IN INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMACY, ZAMBIA HAS CONTINUED TO ASSUME A LEADING ROLE IN THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT

COMMUNITY, THE COMMON MARKET FOR EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA AND THE AFRICAN UNION. WE HAVE ASSUMED THE CHAIR OF THE SADC TROIKA ORGAN ON POLITICS, DEFENCE AND SECURITY. THIS IMPLIES THAT ZAMBIA WILL ONCE AGAIN PLAY A LEADING ROLE IN PROMOTING POLITICAL STABILITY IN THE REGION. FURTHER, MOST MEETINGS OF THIS ORGAN WILL BE HELD IN THE COUNTRY. ZAMBIA, THEREFORE, STANDS TO BENEFIT IN THE AREA OF CONFERENCE TOURISM.

MR. SPEAKER,

150. GOVERNMENT IS ALSO ACTIVELY ENGAGING WITH BILATERAL PARTNERS IN THE REGION AND BEYOND. THE AREAS OF COOPERATION INCLUDE AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES, LIVESTOCK, TOURISM, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, INNOVATION, FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND PARTNERSHIPS AMONG PRIVATE SECTOR PLAYERS. WE EXPECT THESE BILATERAL ENGAGEMENTS TO YIELD TANGIBLE RESULTS SUCH AS THE LUSAKA ROAD DECONGESTION PROJECT, THE LUSAKA CARDIAC SPECIALIST HOSPITAL AND THE KING SALMAN WOMEN AND CHILDREN'S SPECIALIST HOSPITAL THAT ARE UNDERWAY.

MR. SPEAKER,

151. ZAMBIA WAS AMONG THE **43** AFRICAN COUNTRIES THAT SIGNED THE KIGALI DECLARATION ON 21ST MARCH, 2018. THE DECLARATION WILL CULMINATE INTO THE OPERATIONALISATION OF THE AFRICAN

UNION CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA. THIS FREE TRADE AREA WILL BE THE LARGEST TRADING BLOC IN THE WORLD, BRINGING TOGETHER **55** COUNTRIES, A COMBINED POPULATION OF ABOUT **1.2** BILLION PEOPLE AND A COMBINED GDP OF **3.4 TRILLION UNITED STATES DOLLARS**.

152. TO BENEFIT FROM THIS FREE TRADE AGREEMENT, WE NEED TO ACCELERATE OUR INDUSTRIALISATION IN ORDER TO HAVE A SHARE IN THIS EXPORT MARKET. WE ALSO NEED TO CONFORM TO LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS AS WELL AS STRICTLY ENFORCE COMPLIANCE TO COMPULSORY STANDARDS ON BOTH IMPORTS AND EXPORTS. IN ADDITION, BUYING ZAMBIAN PRODUCTS WILL STRENGTHEN OUR INDUSTRIES TO COMPETE AT THE CONTINENTAL LEVEL.

MR. SPEAKER.

153. AS AN INDEPENDENT STATE ZAMBIA CREATES AND KEEPS CORDIAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH ITS FRIENDS IN THE BROADER INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY OF NATIONS. THESE RELATIONSHIPS ARE BASED ON MUTUAL BILATERAL AND MULTI-LATERAL CONSIDERATIONS INFORMED BY COMMON GOALS OF MAKING BETTER, THE LIVES OF OUR PEOPLE. IN THIS REGARD, OUR RIGHT TO CHOOSE OUR FRIENDSHIP WITH ONE NATION IS NOT DEPENDANT ON MAKING ENEMIES WITH OTHERS.

154. WE SHALL CHOOSE OUR OWN FRIENDS ON OUR OWN TERMS AND THAT DOES NOT MEAN APPEASING ANYONE WITH UNJUSTIFIED ENEMITY WITH OTHERS. OUR FRIENDSHIP WITH CHINA IS MUTUAL, AND NO AMOUNT OF RECKLESS PROPAGANDA WILL DETER US FROM ENTRENCHING THIS RELATIONSHIP FOR THE COMMON GOOD OF OUR PEOPLE.

155. WE ARE PROUD OF OUR FRIENDSHIP WITH CHINA, EUROPE, AMERICA AND INDIA. WE ARE PROUD OF OUR FRIENDSHIPS WITHIN AU, SADC, COMESA, AND WITH OTHER INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES.

156. I THEREFORE IMPLORE YOU COUNTRYMEN AND WOMEN, TO IGNORE THE MISLEADING HEADLINES THAT SEEK TO MALIGN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH CHINA BY MISCHARACTERISING OUR ECONOMIC COOPERATION TO MEAN COLONIALISM. CHINA DOES NOT HAVE THAT RECORD; NEITHER DOES IT SEEK A HORSE AND RIDER RELATIONSHIP WITH ZAMBIA.

157. WE ARE A FULLY CONSCIOUS NATION, ALIVE TO THE FACT THAT WE NEED TO UPLIFT THE PLIGHT OF OUR PEOPLE. I WANT TO EMPHASIZE THAT ALL FORMS OF BILATERAL COOPERATION WITH CHINA ARE, AND WILL ALWAYS BE INFORMED BY THIS NOBLE FOCUS ON THE NEED TO BUILD A SUPPORTING INFRASTRUCTURE TO ENABLE OUR PEOPLE BUILD SOUND AND SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS.

CONCLUSION

MR. SPEAKER,

158. IN THE COURSE OF THIS ADDRESS, I HAVE OUTLINED WHAT GOVERNMENT HAS AND IS DOING TO ADVANCE OUR DEVELOPMENT AGENDA, ESPECIALLY IN THE AREAS OF MACROECONOMIC STABILISATION, SOCIO-ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE, HUMAN CAPITAL, POVERTY AND VULNERABILITY REDUCTION. I HAVE ALSO HIGHLIGHTED THE PROGRESS WE ARE MAKING IN THE AREAS OF ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT AND INDUSTRIALISATION. THESE MEASURES ARE KEY IN ATTAINING VISION 2030. I BELIEVE THAT, THIS DEVELOPMENT TRAJECTORY CANNOT BE EASILY ACCOMPLISHED WITHOUT A KEEN SENSE OF PATRIOTISM AND INCLUSION OF EVERYONE.

159. I CALL UPON EVERY CITIZEN TO CONTINUE BUILDING ON THIS FIRM FOUNDATION AND MAKE THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS MAKING A SMART ZAMBIA A REALITY AS WELL AS CREATING A BETTER FUTURE FOR ALL ZAMBIANS BY 2030. WE WANT A ZAMBIA WHICH POSTERITY WILL BE PROUD OF. A ZAMBIA THAT WILL BE A BEACON OF PROSPERITY IN AFRICA. A ZAMBIA THAT WILL BE ADMIRER, NOT ONLY BY AFRICA, BUT THE WHOLE WORLD.

MR. SPEAKER,

160. WE MUST REMAIN UNITED IF WE HAVE TO SUSTAIN THE GAINS WE HAVE ACHIEVED SO FAR. TO FOSTER THIS UNITY, LET US CONTINUE TO DIALOGUE WITH EACH OTHER. IT IS ONLY THROUGH DIALOGUE THAT WE WILL RESOLVE OUR ISSUES AND FOCUS OUR ENERGIES ON DEVELOPMENTAL MATTERS. I, THEREFORE, WANT TO COMMEND ALL THE POLITICAL PLAYERS WHO HAVE SHOWN COMMITMENT TO THE PROCESS OF DIALOGUE AS WELL AS TO ENDING POLITICAL VIOLENCE.

MR. SPEAKER,

161. AS WE STRIVE TOWARDS ACHIEVING VISION 2030, WE MUST NOT FORGET THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD MORALS AND ETHICS. LET US RENEW OUR PLEDGE TO UPHOLD OUR NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES FOR A BETTER ZAMBIA. LET US BUILD A ZAMBIA THAT LEAVES A LASTING MARK ON THE WORLD.

162. IN ALL OUR ENDEAVOURS, WE MUST LOOK TO GOD OUR CREATOR FOR WISDOM, GUIDANCE AND STRENGTH AS WE EXECUTE OUR DEVELOPMENT AGENDA. TOGETHER WITH POSITIVE ATTITUDE WE WILL SUCCEED. TOGETHER WITH POSITIVE WORK CULTURE WE MUST PROGRESS. TOGETHER WITH POSITIVE APPROACHES WE WILL STRIVE TO ACHIEVE.

MR. SPEAKER,

163. IT IS NOW MY HONOUR AND PRIVILEGE TO DECLARE THE THIRD SESSION OF THE TWELFTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OFFICIALLY OPENED.

MAY GOD BLESS OUR GREAT NATION, ZAMBIA.

I THANK YOU.