

**SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY, PRESIDENT HAKAINDE HICHILEMA DURING
THE CEREMONIAL OPENING OF THE 1ST SESSION OF THE 13TH NATIONAL
ASSEMBLY**

INTRODUCTION

MADAM SPEAKER,

IT IS A GREAT HONOUR FOR ME TO BE HERE TODAY TO ADDRESS THIS AUGUST HOUSE ON THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE THIRTEENTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.

THIS SESSION MARKS THE BEGINNING OF MY FIRST FIVE-YEAR MANDATE AS PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA AND I AM HONOURED TO BE THE FIRST PRESIDENT TO ADDRESS THIS AUGUST HOUSE, IN THE PRESENCE OF THE FIRST FEMALE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE.

I THANK THE ALMIGHTY GOD FOR GIVING ME AND THE UNITED PARTY FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, THE OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE THE PEOPLE OF THIS GREAT COUNTRY.

MY PROFOUND GRATITUDE GOES TO THE PEOPLE OF ZAMBIA FOR OVERWHELMINGLY ELECTING ME AS THEIR PRESIDENT.

I AM TRULY HUMBLLED BY THE RESPONSIBILITY THAT YOU, THE ZAMBIAN PEOPLE, HAVE PLACED IN OUR HANDS.

WE, IN TURN, SHALL SERVE YOU DILIGENTLY AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH YOUR ASPIRATIONS.

OBITUARIES

MADAM SPEAKER,

ON THURSDAY, 17TH JUNE THIS YEAR, A DARK CLOUD BEFELL OUR COUNTRY.

WE LOST OUR GALLANT FOUNDING FATHER AND FIRST PRESIDENT OF THIS GREAT NATION, DR. KENNETH DAVID KAUNDA.

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR HIS IMMENSE CONTRIBUTION TO THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE OF NOT ONLY OUR COUNTRY, BUT ALSO OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE REGION AND BEYOND.

WE, AS A PEOPLE, MISS HIM AND SHALL FOREVER BE GRATEFUL TO THE ALMIGHTY GOD FOR GIVING US SUCH A GREAT SON OF AFRICA.

BARELY THREE DAYS AFTER THE DEATH OF OUR FOUNDING FATHER, WE LOST YET ANOTHER GALLANT ZAMBIAN, OUR CHIEF JUSTICE, HER LADYSHIP MRS. IRENE CHIRWA MAMBILIMA, WHO PASSED AWAY ON 20TH JUNE, 2021.

WE REMEMBER HER VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION TO THE JUDICIARY AND SERVICE TO THE NATION.

ADDITIONALLY, OUR COUNTRY ENDURED FURTHER DESPAIR RESULTING FROM THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, WHERE MANY OF OUR LOVED ONES PASSED AWAY.

IT IS, THEREFORE, IMPORTANT THAT THIS AUGUST HOUSE OBSERVES A MINUTE OF SILENCE IN HONOUR OF OUR LATE LUMINARIES AND THE CITIZENS WHO SUCCUMBED TO THE CORONAVIRUS.

(PAUSE FOR A MINUTE OF SILENCE)

MAY THEIR SOULS REST IN ETERNAL PEACE.

CONGRATULATIONS

MADAM SPEAKER,

ALLOW ME, ON THIS AUSPICIOUS OCCASION, TO CONGRATULATE YOU AND THE TWO DEPUTY SPEAKERS ON YOUR RESPECTIVE ELECTION TO SUPERINTEND THE AFFAIRS OF THIS AUGUST HOUSE.

THE RESPONSIBILITY PLACED ON YOUR SHOULDERS IS ONEROUS.

OUR PEOPLE EXPECT YOU TO DISCHARGE YOUR DUTIES WITH IMPARTIALITY, DIGNITY AND HONOUR.

I AM CONFIDENT THAT YOU WILL EXECUTE YOUR DUTIES DILIGENTLY AND MAINTAIN THE DECORUM OF THE HOUSE.

I ALSO CONGRATULATE ALL OF YOU, THE RE-ELECTED AND NEWLY ELECTED MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT, ON YOUR ELECTION TO REPRESENT THE PEOPLE OF ZAMBIA.

I EQUALLY CONGRATULATE YOU HONOURABLE MEMBERS, WHO HAVE BEEN NOMINATED TO THIS AUGUST HOUSE.

THE PEOPLE OF ZAMBIA HAVE PLACED GREAT CONFIDENCE IN YOU.

THE PEOPLE OF ZAMBIA VOTED FOR CHANGE.

OUR PEOPLE MUST BEGIN TO ENJOY THE FRUITS OF THIS CHANGE.

YOUR PRESENCE IN THIS HOUSE SHOULD, THEREFORE, NOT BE FOR PERSONAL GAIN.

WE MUST ALL PREOCCUPY OURSELVES WITH A CALL TO DUTY AND SELFLESS SERVICE FOR THE BETTERMENT OF OUR COUNTRY.

YOU ARE EXPECTED TO REPRESENT THEM EFFECTIVELY IN ORDER TO CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS IMPROVING THEIR LIVELIHOODS.

LET US WORK HARD AND DELIVER TO OUR PEOPLE'S EXPECTATIONS.

COMMENDATIONS

MADAM SPEAKER,

LET ME TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO PAY TRIBUTE TO THE IMMEDIATE PAST SPEAKER, DR. PATRICK MATIBINI AND THE TWO FORMER DEPUTY SPEAKERS, MS. CATHERINE NAMUGALA AND MR. MWIMBA MALAMA, FOR PRESIDING OVER THE BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

I ALSO COMMEND THE CLERK OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, MRS. CECILIA NSENDULUKA MBEWE, AND HER STAFF FOR THE SUPPORT RENDERED TO THE HOUSE DURING THE TWELFTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.

AS A NATION, WE WERE HAPPY THAT, DESPITE THE CHALLENGES POSED BY THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC DURING THE FOURTH AND FIFTH SESSIONS OF THE TWELFTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, THE LEADERSHIP AT PARLIAMENT WAS INNOVATIVE AND WORKED TIRELESSLY TO ENSURE THAT THE BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE WAS CONDUCTED IN AN EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT MANNER.

MADAM SPEAKER,

LET ME ALSO PAY SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO THE FORMER VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS, HER HONOUR MRS. INONGE MUTUKWA WINA.

HER CONTRIBUTION TO THE SUCCESSFUL CONDUCT OF BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE WILL ALWAYS BE APPRECIATED.

I AM CONFIDENT THAT THE NEW VICE-PRESIDENT, HER HONOUR MRS. MUTALE NALUMANGO, WILL CERTAINLY BE EQUAL TO THE TASK AS LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS IN THE HOUSE.

2021 GENERAL ELECTIONS

MADAM SPEAKER,

I AM HAPPY TO NOTE THAT THE AUGUST, 2021 GENERAL ELECTIONS WERE HELD SUCCESSFULLY.

DESPITE ISOLATED INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE RECORDED BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER VOTING, THE ELECTIONS WERE GENERALLY PEACEFUL.

THE OVERWHELMING SUPPORT OF THE ZAMBIAN PEOPLE CARRIED THE UPND TO VICTORY, IN THE MIDST OF ENORMOUS EFFORTS TO SUPPRESS OUR FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT AND OTHER DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS.

WE PLEDGE TO FOSTER DEMOCRACY AND ALLOW ALL THE RIGHTS AND LIBERTIES THAT WILL ALLOW IT TO THRIVE.

WE RECOGNISE WITH GRATITUDE, THE SMOOTH TRANSITION OF LEADERSHIP FROM THE PATRIOTIC FRONT GOVERNMENT TO OUR GOVERNMENT.

I THANK MY PREDECESSOR, HIS EXCELLENCY, MR. EDGAR CHAGWA LUNGU, FOR FACILITATING THE TRANSITION.

THE AFRICAN CONTINENT AND WORLD AT LARGE, HOLD ZAMBIA IN HIGH ESTEEM FOR THE MATURITY OF OUR DEMORACY.

AS ZAMBIANS, WE SHOULD BE PROUD.

I COMMEND THE ELECTORATE WHO EXERCISED THEIR CIVIC DUTY TO VOTE FOR LEADERS OF THEIR CHOICE IN A PEACEFUL MANNER.

SPECIAL APPRECIATION GOES TO THE YOUTH WHO TURNED OUT IN LARGE NUMBERS TO VOTE AND BRING ABOUT THE CHANGE THAT THEY SO MUCH DESIRED.

I ALSO COMMEND ALL POLITICAL PARTIES AND INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE ELECTIONS.

ALLOW ME TO ALSO EXTEND MY COMMENDATIONS TO THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION OF ZAMBIA FOR ENSURING THAT THE ELECTIONS WERE HELD IN A CONDUCTIVE ENVIRONMENT, ESPECIALLY AMIDST THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

I FURTHER COMMEND THE ELECTION OBSERVERS, THE CHURCH, TRADITIONAL LEADERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS FOR THE DISTINCT ROLES THEY PLAYED DURING THE ELECTIONS.

MADAM SPEAKER,

NOW THAT THE 2021 ELECTIONS ARE BEHIND US, IT IS TIME FOR US TO UNITE AS A NATION AND FOCUS OUR ENERGIES ON DEVELOPING OUR COUNTRY.

IT IS TIME FOR ALL OF US TO WORK TOGETHER AND TAKE ZAMBIA FORWARD.

IT IS TIME TO FOCUS ON ADDRESSING OUR COMMON CHALLENGES AS A PEOPLE.

THEME OF THE ADDRESS

MADAM SPEAKER,

THE UNITED PARTY FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT GOVERNMENT HAS A HUGE TASK AHEAD TO TURN AROUND THE ECONOMIC FORTUNES OF OUR COUNTRY.

REBUILDING OUR ECONOMY IS TOP ON OUR AGENDA, AS THIS IS WHAT WILL DELIVER JOBS, AND BETTER LIVELIHOODS FOR OUR PEOPLE.

WE HAVE INDEED INHERITED AN ECONOMY THAT IS IN DIRE STRAITS AND REQUIRES BOLD AND DECISIVE ACTION TO BE TAKEN TO ENSURE RECOVERY.

WE NEED THE SUPPORT OF EVERY CITIZEN TO ACHIEVE OUR DEVELOPMENT AGENDA.

OUR ADMINISTRATION WILL, THEREFORE, CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH EVERY CITIZEN WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN AND BENEFIT FROM ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES.

AS WE BEGIN OUR FIRST TERM IN OFFICE, OUR ADMINISTRATION WILL EMBARK ON A NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENDA TO ENSURE ACCELERATED ECONOMIC RECOVERY.

OUR VISION IS TO HAVE A UNITED AND PROSPEROUS ZAMBIA THAT PROVIDES EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL.

WE ARE DETERMINED TO MEET THE BASIC NEEDS OF EVERY ZAMBIAN AND CREATE A CONDUCTIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR ZAMBIA TO BECOME A PROSPEROUS MIDDLE INCOME COUNTRY.

WE WILL IMPLEMENT POLICIES TO ADDRESS THE FISCAL DEFICIT WHILE ENSURING THAT CONFIDENCE IS RESTORED IN THE MARKETS.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO BRING STABILITY TO OUR ECONOMY AND ACCELERATE GROWTH.

AS WE EMBARK ON THIS JOURNEY, IT IS CARDINAL THAT WE EQUALLY ENHANCE THE PROVISION OF EQUITABLE ACCESS TO ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES TO OUR CITIZENS, ESPECIALLY OUR YOUTH.

WE WILL ALSO ENHANCE PROVISION OF ADEQUATE SOCIAL SERVICES.

INDEED, WE WILL FURTHER ENHANCE THE PROVISION OF SOCIAL PROTECTION TO THE POOR AND VULNERABLE IN OUR SOCIETY.

IT IS IN THIS REGARD THAT THE THEME OF MY ADDRESS IS “CREATING A UNITED, PROSPEROUS AND EQUITABLE ZAMBIA: RESTORING ECONOMIC GROWTH AND SAFE-GUARDING LIVELIHOODS.”

MADAM SPEAKER,

THE THEME CALLS ON ALL OF US TO UNITE REGARDLESS OF OUR POLITICAL AFFILIATION, ETHNICITY, RELIGION AND GENDER.

THERE IS STRENGTH IN UNITY.

WE NEED TO FOCUS ON WHAT UNITES US AND NOT WHAT DIVIDES US AS A PEOPLE.

WE ARE DETERMINED TO USHER IN AN ERA WHERE POLITICS ARE USED TO STRENGTHEN RATHER THAN WEAKEN OUR UNITY.

WE ARE DETERMINED TO MAKE OUR NATIONAL MOTTO OF “ONE ZAMBIA, ONE NATION” A REALITY AND NOT JUST A MERE SLOGAN.

WE ALL DESIRE A PROSPEROUS AND EQUITABLE SOCIETY.

THE LEVELS OF POVERTY IN OUR COUNTRY ARE UNACCEPTABLY HIGH.

WE MUST END THE VICIOUS CYCLE OF POVERTY AND BRING PROSPERITY TO ALL.

WE WILL WORK TO REDUCE VARIOUS FORMS OF INEQUALITY AND CREATE A MORE EQUITABLE SOCIETY.

WE WILL SAFEGUARD THE LIVELIHOODS OF THE POOR AND VULNERABLE IN OUR SOCIETY.

WE WILL PROVIDE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT TO ALL OUR CITIZENS.

MADAM SPEAKER,

THE THEME ALSO REFLECTS OUR DESIRE TO REVERSE THE CURRENT ECONOMIC DOWN-TURN.

WE WILL ACCELERATE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL.

WE WILL INCREASE ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION AND HEALTHCARE AS WELL AS WATER AND SANITATION SERVICES.

IN ADDITION, WE MUST SUSTAIN LIVELIHOODS, ENSURE AFFORDABLE COST OF LIVING AS WELL AS FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY FOR OUR PEOPLE.

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

MADAM SPEAKER,

THE THEME SETS THE TONE AND DIRECTION FOR OUR DEVELOPMENT AGENDA OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS.

OUR ADMINISTRATION IS DETERMINED TO CREATING A UNITED AND PROSPEROUS ZAMBIA WITH EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES ACROSS ETHNIC, RELIGIOUS AND GENDER CONSIDERATIONS, LIVING IN HARMONY IN A FREE DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY.

MADAM SPEAKER,

OUR ADMINISTRATION WILL DEVELOP A ROBUST NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN FOR THE PERIOD 2022 TO 2026.

THE 8TH NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN WILL REFLECT OUR ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION AGENDA TO DELIVER ON THE NATIONAL VISION AND THE ASPIRATIONS OF OUR CITIZENS.

THE FOCUS OF THE TRANSFORMATION AGENDA WILL BE ON ATTAINING OUTCOMES BEYOND ECONOMIC GROWTH TO INCLUDE GREATER INCLUSION AND POVERTY REDUCTION.

MADAM SPEAKER,

I WILL NOW PROCEED TO OUTLINE THE BROAD POLICY DIRECTION OF MY GOVERNMENT FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS.

I WILL DO SO UNDER THE FOLLOWING THEMATIC AREAS:

I. ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION AND JOB CREATION;

II. HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT;

III. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY; AND

IV. GOOD GOVERNANCE ENVIRONMENT.

ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION AND JOB CREATION

MADAM SPEAKER,

ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION WILL BE THE OVER-ARCHING FRAMEWORK THAT WILL BRING TOGETHER INTERVENTIONS IN THE VARIOUS SECTORS OF THE ECONOMY TO CREATE JOBS AND REDUCE POVERTY.

TO THIS END, GOVERNMENT WILL IMPLEMENT POLICY MEASURES TO PROMOTE ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION,

PARTICULARLY IN JOB RICH SECTORS OF AGRICULTURE, MINING, TOURISM, ENERGY, COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, GREEN ECONOMY, TRANSPORT AS WELL AS INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY.

OUR COMMITMENT TO TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENT IN OUR COUNTRY IS EVIDENCED BY THE PROPOSED FORMATION OF THE MINISTRY OF TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCE.

THIS WILL ALLOW POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION TO SPUR DEVELOPMENT IN THE CROSS-CUTTING SECTOR AND BE A CATALYST FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND TRANSFORMATION.

ADDITIONALLY, THE PROPOSED MINISTRY OF SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZED ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT IS POISED TO FOSTER THE DEVELOPMENT, SUPPORT AND GROWTH OF SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZED ENTERPRISES.

MADAM SPEAKER,

THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR IS CRITICAL IN DRIVING GROWTH, CREATING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND CONTRIBUTING TO PROSPERITY OF OUR COUNTRY.

OUR COUNTRY HAS IN EXCESS OF 40 MILLION HECTARES OF ARABLE LAND.

WE HAVE ABUNDANT SURFACE AND UNDERGROUND WATER RESOURCES.

WE HAVE FAVOURABLE WEATHER CONDITIONS.

WE HAVE READILY AVAILABLE DOMESTIC, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL MARKETS FOR OUR AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES.

MOST OF OUR PEOPLE DERIVE THEIR LIVELIHOOD FROM AGRICULTURE.

THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR IS, HOWEVER, CHARACTERISED BY LOW PRODUCTIVITY LEVELS, INSUFFICIENT AGRICULTURAL SUPPORT INFRASTRUCTURE, INADEQUATE DELIVERY OF EXTENSION SERVICES AND POOR LAND HUSBANDRY PRACTICES.

IN ADDITION, THERE IS INADEQUATE VALUE ADDITION, HIGH COST OF FINANCE AND HIGH DEPENDENCY ON ONE CROP, MAIZE.

INVESTING IN THIS SECTOR, THEREFORE, GUARANTEES SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENTS IN THE LIVES OF THE MAJORITY OF OUR PEOPLE.

TO THIS END, GOVERNMENT WILL IMPLEMENT A COMPREHENSIVE AGRICULTURAL TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME WITH THE AIM OF MAKING THE SECTOR A VIABLE COMMERCIAL UNDERTAKING.

IT IS ONLY THROUGH AGRICULTURAL TRANSFORMATION THAT WE WILL END HUNGER AND IMPROVE NUTRITION WHILE ACCELERATING ECONOMIC GROWTH.

THIS WILL ULTIMATELY MAKE OUR COUNTRY FOOD SECURE AND A BREADBASKET FOR THE REGION.

MADAM SPEAKER,

WE WILL RESTRUCTURE THE SECTOR TO FOCUS ON ACTIVITIES AND INTERVENTIONS THAT RAISE PRODUCTION AND PRODUCTIVITY IN CROPS, LIVESTOCK AND FISHERIES.

WE WILL CREATE A CONDUCTIVE AND STABLE ENVIRONMENT, WHICH IS A CRITICAL PRE-CONDITION FOR AGRICULTURAL TRANSFORMATION.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO IMPROVE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AND PRODUCTIVITY, GOVERNMENT WILL ENSURE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE AGRICULTURAL INPUTS SUCH AS FERTILIZERS, CHEMICALS AND PESTICIDES.

THIS WILL BE ACHIEVED THROUGH THE RE-DESIGNING OF THE FARMER INPUT SUPPORT PROGRAMME TO TRANSFORM IT INTO A MORE COST-EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE INTERVENTION.

THIS WILL PROMOTE COST EFFICIENCY AND ENHANCE PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION.

WE WILL PARTNER WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND ESTABLISH AGRO INPUT MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES TO PRODUCE THESE INPUTS FOR OUR FARMERS.

THIS WILL PROMOTE A STRONG AGRO-DEALER NETWORK ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

WE WILL CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SMALL AND LARGE BUSINESSES IN THE PRODUCTION OF AGRO INPUTS.

MADAM SPEAKER,

OUR ADMINISTRATION WILL ALSO PROMOTE CROP DIVERSIFICATION AWAY FROM MAIZE BY SUPPORTING PRODUCTION OF A WIDE RANGE OF CEREAL CROPS, LEGUMES, FRUIT TREES, ROOTS AND TUBERS, OIL CROPS AS WELL AS FIBRE CROPS.

THIS WILL BE ACHIEVED THROUGH IMPROVED EXTENSION SERVICES, MECHANISATION, IRRIGATION, VALUE ADDITION AND IMPROVED MARKET ACCESS.

THIS WILL RESULT IN ENHANCED NATIONAL FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY AS WELL AS INCREASED INCOME FOR OUR FARMERS.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO PROMOTE AND INCREASE LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION, GOVERNMENT WILL FOCUS ON STOCKING AND RESTOCKING, ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION AS WELL AS ENHANCED DISEASE SURVEILLANCE AND CONTROL.

GOVERNMENT WILL ALSO FACILITATE RESEARCH IN ANIMAL BREEDING, DISEASE PREVENTION AND NUTRITION.

FURTHER, LIVESTOCK MARKET PROMOTION AND VALUE ADDITION WILL BE PRIORITISED.

WE WILL ALSO SUPPORT THE CONSTRUCTION AND REHABILITATION OF LIVESTOCK INFRASTRUCTURE SUCH AS LABORATORIES, SERVICE CENTRES AND BREEDING CENTRES ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

MADAM SPEAKER,

AQUACULTURE IS ANOTHER AREA WITH GREAT POTENTIAL TO PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR PEOPLE TO VENTURE IN AND IMPROVE THEIR LIVELIHOODS.

IN THIS REGARD, WE WILL PROMOTE THE EXPANSION AND INTENSIFICATION OF FISH FARMING ACROSS THE COUNTRY, ESPECIALLY AMONG WOMEN AND YOUTH.

WE WILL ALSO PROMOTE PRODUCTION OF FINGERLINGS AS WELL AS ESTABLISHMENT OF HATCHERIES IN THE COUNTRY TO FACILITATE THE GROWTH OF THE AQUACULTURE INDUSTRY.

THIS WILL NOT ONLY IMPROVE THE LIVELIHOODS OF OUR PEOPLE, BUT ALSO MEET THE GROWING DEMAND FOR FISH IN THE COUNTRY.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO ENSURE A TRANSFORMED AGRICULTURAL SECTOR, WHICH WILL EFFECTIVELY CONTRIBUTE TO RESTORATION OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND JOB CREATION,

GOVERNMENT WILL REVIEW THE EXISTING AGRICULTURAL POLICIES.

WE WANT TO ENHANCE PRODUCTION AND PRODUCTIVITY, VALUE ADDITION, MARKETING, AS WELL AS TRANSPARENCY AND PREDICTABILITY OF THE EXPORT REGIME IN THE SECTOR.

I, THEREFORE, URGE OUR PEOPLE TO SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITIES THAT EXIST IN THE SECTOR SO THAT, AS A COUNTRY, WE ARE NOT ONLY FOOD SUFFICIENT BUT ALSO BECOME THE BREADBASKET OF THE REGION AND BEYOND.

WE HAVE THE CAPACITY TO DO SO.

LET US, THEREFORE, DO IT.

MADAM SPEAKER,

THE MINING SECTOR WILL CONTINUE TO PLAY A KEY ROLE IN ACCELERATING ECONOMIC GROWTH.

DESPITE OUR LONG MINING HISTORY AND LARGE MINERAL RESOURCE ENDOWMENT, ZAMBIA STILL FACES A NUMBER OF CHALLENGES IN THE SECTOR.

THESE INCLUDE LOW LEVELS OF LOCAL PARTICIPATION AND OWNERSHIP, LACK OF TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY AS WELL AS INCONSISTENT FISCAL POLICY.

OUR ADMINISTRATION IS DETERMINED TO ENSURE INCREASED LOCAL PARTICIPATION AND OWNERSHIP IN THE SECTOR, MORE JOBS BEING CREATED, AS WELL AS INCREASED INVESTMENTS IN THE MINING SECTOR.

HARNESSING THE OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE IN THE MINING SECTOR WILL BE CRUCIAL TO OUR ECONOMIC REVIVAL.

WE WILL ENSURE INCREASED COPPER AND OTHER MINERAL PRODUCTION, AS WELL AS MAXIMISING THE BENEFITS FROM VARIOUS MINERALS SUCH AS GOLD, COBALT, MANGANESE AMONG OTHERS.

WE WILL ALSO PROMOTE FURTHER EXPLORATION, AS WELL AS VALUE ADDITION.

IN THIS REGARD, WE WILL OFFER APPROPRIATE INCENTIVES IN THE SECTOR.

WE WANT TO POSITION THE COUNTRY TO BE A LEADING MANUFACTURER OF MINERAL VALUE-ADDED PRODUCTS SUCH AS ELECTRICAL CABLES AND COPPER-BASED ACCESSORIES TO MEET THE GROWING DEMAND OF SUCH PRODUCTS.

THIS WILL TRANSLATE INTO MORE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY THE YOUTH.

WE WILL ALSO INCREASE EARNINGS FROM EXPORTS OF VALUE ADDED PRODUCTS AND ULTIMATELY ENHANCE PROVISION OF PUBLIC SERVICES TO OUR PEOPLE.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO ENSURE PREDICTABLE AND SUSTAINED INVESTMENT IN THE SECTOR, GOVERNMENT, IN CONSULTATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS, WILL REVIEW THE MINING TAX POLICY FRAMEWORK.

THIS IS AIMED AT INTRODUCING A STABLE MINING TAX REGIME NECESSARY TO INCREASE INVESTMENT IN THE SECTOR.

WE WILL ENSURE THAT OUR PEOPLE RECEIVE THEIR FAIR SHARE FROM OUR MINERAL WEALTH.

FURTHER, TO ENHANCE OPERATIONS IN THE SECTOR, GOVERNMENT WILL REVIEW THE EXISTING INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK.

WITH THESE MEASURES IN PLACE AND INCREASED PARTICIPATION OF OUR PEOPLE, THE MINING SECTOR IS POISED TO CONTRIBUTE MORE TOWARDS RESTORING ECONOMIC GROWTH AND IMPROVING THE LIVELIHOODS FOR OUR PEOPLE.

MADAM SPEAKER,

OUR COUNTRY IS ENDOWED WITH ABUNDANT NATURAL BEAUTY, COUPLED WITH A RICH CULTURAL HERITAGE.

WE HAVE UNIQUE AND PRISTINE TOURISM SITES THAT MUST BE HARNESSSED TO BENEFIT ALL OUR PEOPLE.

TO THIS EFFECT, OUR GOVERNMENT WILL PRIORITISE TOURISM AS ONE OF THE KEY SECTORS FOR RESTORING ECONOMIC GROWTH, CREATING JOBS AND REDUCING POVERTY.

THE POTENTIAL OF THE TOURISM SECTOR HAS, HOWEVER, NOT BEEN FULLY EXPLOITED.

THE SECTOR IS CHARACTERISED BY FEWER FOREIGN VISITORS, SHORTER LENGTH-OF-STAY AND A LOW NUMBER OF DOMESTIC TOURISTS.

IN THE RECENT PAST, THE SECTOR HAS BEEN SEVERELY AFFECTED BY THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

TO REPOSITION THE SECTOR AMID THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, OUR ADMINISTRATION WILL PUT IN PLACE A ROBUST PROGRAMME TO FACILITATE A QUICK RECOVERY OF THE SECTOR.

IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS, OUR ADMINISTRATION WILL FOCUS ON ATTRACTING INTERNATIONAL TOURISTS WHILE PROMOTING DOMESTIC TOURISM FOR ENHANCED SECTOR RESILIENCE.

WE WILL PUT IN PLACE A ROBUST TOURISM MARKETING STRATEGY THAT WILL PACKAGE A DIVERSIFIED RANGE OF TOURISM PRODUCTS SUCH AS TRADITIONAL CEREMONIES, VISUAL ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE SITES.

WE WILL ALSO REDUCE THE COST OF DOING BUSINESS AND SOME NEGATIVE PERCEPTIONS IN THE SECTOR.

FURTHER, WE WILL OPEN UP AREAS OF GREAT POTENTIAL SUCH AS THE NORTHERN CIRCUIT TO ENHANCE TOURIST FLOWS.

WE WILL CONSTRUCT AND UP-GRADE ROADS, AS WELL AS AIRSTRIPS AND AIRPORTS TO TOURISM SITES TO IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY.

THESE INTERVENTIONS, AMONG OTHERS, WILL NOT ONLY MAKE ZAMBIA A TOURISM DESTINATION OF CHOICE, BUT ALSO CONTRIBUTE TO RESTORING ECONOMIC GROWTH IN THE COUNTRY.

I, THEREFORE, URGE PLAYERS IN THE SECTOR TO CONTINUE BEING CREATIVE AND INNOVATIVE IN DESIGNING AND PACKAGING TOURISM PRODUCTS.

I ALSO CALL UPON ZAMBIANS TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE NUMEROUS TOURISM SITES ACROSS THE COUNTRY AND PARTICIPATE IN LOCAL TOURISM.

MADAM SPEAKER,

ENERGY IS AN IMPORTANT DRIVING FORCE FOR DEVELOPMENT AND A KEY ENABLER FOR PRODUCTIVITY AND INDUSTRIAL GROWTH IN OUR ECONOMY.

DESPITE THIS POTENTIAL, INVESTMENT IN THE SECTOR HAS NOT GROWN IN TANDEM WITH THE SECTOR'S POTENTIAL.

OUR ADMINISTRATION WILL ENSURE THAT THE ENERGY SECTOR HAS AN APPROPRIATE POLICY FRAMEWORK THAT WILL DELIVER AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY FROM ALTERNATIVE RENEWABLE GREEN ECONOMY SOURCES.

THIS WILL ENSURE SUFFICIENT CAPACITY TO POWER THE ECONOMY AND CUSHION THE COUNTRY FROM THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON HYDRO-ELECTRICITY GENERATION.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO ATTRACT MORE INVESTMENT IN THE ELECTRICITY SUB-SECTOR, OUR ADMINISTRATION WILL PUT IN PLACE COST-REFLECTIVE TARIFFS.

WE WANT MORE OF OUR PEOPLE TO HAVE ACCESS TO ELECTRICITY BY SCALING UP INVESTMENTS IN OFF-GRID GREEN ENERGY SOLUTIONS.

WE WANT TO TRANSFORM OUR COUNTRY INTO AN ELECTRICITY HUB FOR THE REGION.

WE WILL, THEREFORE, CONTINUE TO INVEST IN THE EXPANSION OF ELECTRICITY GENERATION, MINIMIZE TRANSMISSION AND DISTRIBUTION LOSSES AS WELL AS DEVELOP POWER INTERCONNECTORS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES.

OUR AIM IS TO CREATE EXCESS CAPACITY NEEDED TO EFFECTIVELY END LOAD SHEDDING WITH SURPLUS POWER FOR EXPORT.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO IMPROVE OPERATIONS, EFFICIENCY AND FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY OF THE NATIONAL POWER UTILITY COMPANY, ZESCO LIMITED, OUR ADMINISTRATION WILL IMPLEMENT STRUCTURAL AND FINANCIAL REFORMS.
MADAM SPEAKER,

WITH REGARD TO THE PETROLEUM SUB-SECTOR, WE WILL GUARANTEE SECURITY OF SUPPLY OF PETROLEUM PRODUCTS.

IN ADDITION, GOVERNMENT WILL UNDERTAKE REFORMS IN THE FUEL SUPPLY CHAIN TO REDUCE THE LANDED COST OF PETROLEUM PRODUCTS.

OUR ADMINISTRATION WILL PROGRESSIVELY INCREASE PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION IN THE PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY OF PETROLEUM PRODUCTS.

MADAM SPEAKER,

OUR ADMINISTRATION RECOGNISES THAT TRADE AND INDUSTRY PLAYS A KEY ROLE IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AS IT IS THE BRIDGE THAT CONNECTS PRODUCERS OF GOODS AND SERVICES TO THE CONSUMERS.

THE SECTOR HAS A HUGE POTENTIAL FOR JOB AND WEALTH CREATION, POVERTY REDUCTION AND REVENUE GENERATION FOR OUR COUNTRY.

TO THIS END, WE WILL PURSUE AN EXPORT-LED TRADE STRATEGY THAT WILL FOCUS ON CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT IN THE COMPETITIVENESS AND QUALITY OF OUR EXPORTS.

GOVERNMENT WILL PLACE THE PRIVATE SECTOR AT THE CENTRE OF PRODUCTION AND TRADE AS AN ENGINE OF GROWTH.

WE ARE COMMITTED TO IMPROVING THE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND INCREASE THE PARTICIPATION OF ZAMBIAN BUSINESSES IN REGIONAL AND GLOBAL VALUE CHAINS.

THIS WILL ENHANCE THE CONTRIBUTION OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY TO JOB CREATION AND ECONOMIC GROWTH.

WE WILL HARMONIZE THE TRADE POLICY WITH OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES TO EFFECTIVELY FACILITATE THE FLOW OF TRADE AND INVESTMENT.

WE WILL PUT IN PLACE EXPORT FINANCING SUPPORT MECHANISMS TO SUPPORT ZAMBIAN BUSINESSES IN THEIR EXPORT AGENDA.

IN ADDITION, WE WILL WORK CLOSELY WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN EXPLOITING THE OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE IN THE REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL MARKETS.

TIME HAS COME FOR US TO INCREASE THE SHARE OF ZAMBIAN BUSINESSES AND PRODUCTS ON THE REGIONAL AND GLOBAL MARKET.

TO ENSURE ACCEPTANCE OF ZAMBIAN PRODUCTS GLOBALLY, GOVERNMENT WILL STRENGTHEN THE OPERATIONS OF THE BUREAU OF STANDARDS AND

RELATED BODIES TO ENABLE THESE INSTITUTIONS TO APPROPRIATELY CERTIFY PRODUCTS FOR QUALITY.

WE WILL ALSO PROMOTE INDUSTRIAL INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY AS WELL AS SUPPORT GENERATION OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ASSETS.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO ENHANCE THE COMPETITIVENESS OF OUR LOCAL ENTERPRISES, WE WILL REDUCE TRANSACTION COSTS OF DOING BUSINESS BY STREAMLINING THE NUMBER OF LICENSES AND PERMITS

REQUIRED TO OPERATE A BUSINESS IN THE COUNTRY, AS WELL AS THE TIME IT TAKES TO OBTAIN THEM.

WE WILL ALSO PROMOTE THE USE OF ELECTRONIC REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT SYSTEMS.

IN ADDITION, WE WILL FACILITATE ZAMBIAN OWNED BUSINESSES TO HAVE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE CREDIT AND FINANCE.

TO KEEP THE WHEELS OF THE ECONOMY CONSTANTLY RUNNING, WE WILL PROMOTE E-COMMERCE, WHICH WILL FACILITATE A PRODUCTIVE AND EFFICIENT ECONOMY.

THIS WILL CREATE MORE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR PEOPLE AND PROVIDE CONVENIENCE IN ACCESSING GOODS AND SERVICES.

MADAM SPEAKER,

WITH THESE MEASURES IN PLACE, WE WILL BE ABLE TO FULLY EXPLOIT THE VARIOUS TRADE OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE IN THE COMMON MARKET FOR EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA,

THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY, THE AFRICAN CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA, THE EUROPEAN UNION AND CHINA, AMONG OTHERS.

THIS WILL NOT ONLY CREATE JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR PEOPLE BUT ALSO INCREASE THE REVENUE BASE FOR INDIVIDUALS, BUSINESSES AND THE NATION AS A WHOLE.

MADAM SPEAKER,

GOVERNMENT WILL FOCUS ON THE MICRO, SMALL, MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (SMEs).

WE BELIEVE THAT THIS CATEGORY OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP IS THE MAIN ENGINE FOR JOB AND WEALTH CREATION.

THIS WILL BE SUPPORTED BY BROAD-BASED EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT.

WE WANT TO CREATE A CRITICAL MASS OF ENTREPRENEURS, ESPECIALLY AMONG OUR YOUTH.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TRANSPORT IS THE BACKBONE FOR FACILITATING ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES, TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT.

IT IS A CATALYST FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

DESPITE ITS IMPORTANCE, INVESTMENT IN TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE HAS BEEN LOPSIDED, FOCUSING ON ROAD TRANSPORT AT THE EXPENSE OF OTHER OPTIONS SUCH AS RAIL.

ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIRES CONSIDERABLE HIGH MAINTENANCE AND REHABILITATION COSTS RELATIVE TO RAILWAY INFRASTRUCTURE.

OUR ADMINISTRATION WILL, THEREFORE, FOCUS ON BALANCED AND INTEGRATED TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT.

WE WILL INVEST IN ROAD TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE. WE WILL INVEST IN RAILWAY TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE.

WE WILL INVEST IN AIR TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE.

TO ACHIEVE ALL THIS, WE WILL LEVERAGE PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP INVESTMENT.

MADAM SPEAKER,

GOVERNMENT WILL MAINTAIN, REHABILITATE AND UPGRADE ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE, PARTICULARLY IN RURAL AREAS.

THIS WILL OPEN UP THE COUNTRY AND LINK OUR FARMERS TO MARKETS, EMPLOYEES TO THEIR PLACES OF WORK, STUDENTS TO SCHOOLS, AND THE SICK TO HOSPITALS, AMONG OTHERS.

MADAM SPEAKER,

RECOGNISING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RAILWAY SUB-SECTOR TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO DEVELOPING THE SUB-SECTOR TO PROVIDE FOR A COST-EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION OF BULK CARGO.

THIS IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT IN VIEW OF OUR COUNTRY'S POSITION AS A LAND-LINKED COUNTRY.

MADAM SPEAKER,

WITH REGARD TO THE AIR TRANSPORT SUB-SECTOR, WE WILL FACILITATE THE MODERNIZATION, INTEGRATION AND COMMERCIALIZATION OF AIRPORTS TO MAXIMIZE RETURNS ON INVESTMENT.

THESE MEASURES WILL TRANSFORM ZAMBIA INTO A REGIONAL HUB FOR ROAD, RAIL AND AIR TRANSPORT.

MADAM SPEAKER,

GOVERNMENT RECOGNISES THE CRITICAL ROLE THAT THE DIGITAL AND KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY PLAYS IN ENHANCING PRODUCTIVITY ACROSS ALL SECTORS OF THE ECONOMY.

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AFFECTS EVERY ASPECT OF HUMAN, SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES.

IT ALSO PRESENTS HUGE OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, ESPECIALLY THOSE THAT SEEK TO INDUSTRIALISE, LIKE OURS.

TO HARNESS THIS POTENTIAL, WE WILL MAINSTREAM DIGITAL REVOLUTION IN OUR NATIONAL PROGRAMMES IN ORDER TO TAP INTO THE TALENTS AND CREATIVITY OF ZAMBIANS, ESPECIALLY THE YOUTH.

WE CAN ALL SEE THE TRANSFORMATION BROUGHT ABOUT BY DIGITAL REVOLUTION IN THE PROVISION OF GOODS AND SERVICES.

THIS IS PARTICULARLY THE CASE IN SECTORS SUCH AS FINANCE, AGRICULTURE, TOURISM, MANUFACTURING, INFORMATION, WHOLESALE AND RETAIL TRADE.

WE WILL EXPLOIT THE INCREASED USE OF DIGITAL PLATFORMS AND DELIVERY CHANNELS SUCH AS AUTOMATED TELLER MACHINES, POINTS OF SALE AND MOBILE MONEY SERVICES, WHICH HAVE ALSO ENHANCED FINANCIAL INCLUSION.

MOST OF OUR PEOPLE ARE NOW ENJOYING THE BENEFITS OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY IN THEIR DAILY LIVES.

THIS IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT UNDER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ENVIRONMENT, WHICH HAS RESTRICTED PHYSICAL INTERACTION AND CHANGED THE WAY WE DO THINGS.

WE WILL, THEREFORE, SUPPORT INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY, WHICH OFFER HOME GROWN SOLUTIONS ACROSS ALL SECTORS OF THE ECONOMY.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO SUPPORT THESE AND OTHER INNOVATIONS, WE WILL PROVIDE RELEVANT INFRASTRUCTURE TO ENHANCE CONNECTIVITY AND SUPPORT INVESTMENTS IN OPTIC FIBRE AND TELECOMMUNICATION FACILITIES FOR ENHANCED SERVICE DELIVERY.

WE WILL ALSO PROMOTE PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS IN THE INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY SECTOR.

FURTHER, WE WILL WORK TOWARDS MANAGING TELECOMMUNICATION COSTS AND IMPROVING QUALITY OF SERVICES BY CREATING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR ENTREPRENEURS.

HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

MADAM SPEAKER,

HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IS ESSENTIAL TO MAINTAINING A HEALTHY AND SKILLED POPULATION.

THIS DEMANDS THAT WE IMPROVE THE WELL-BEING OF OUR CITIZENS SO THAT THEY CAN REACH THEIR FULL POTENTIAL.

TO THIS END, IMPROVING ACCESS TO EDUCATION, HEALTH, SOCIAL PROTECTION AS WELL AS WATER AND SANITATION SERVICES WILL BE A PRE-OCCUPATION OF GOVERNMENT IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS.

TO REALISE THIS ASPIRATION, GOVERNMENT WILL FOSTER ACCELERATED SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION THROUGH THE EMPOWERMENT OF OUR CITIZENS.

WE WILL INVEST IN THE SOCIAL SECTOR SO THAT OUR CITIZENRY IS SKILLED, HEALTHY AND EMPOWERED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION AGENDA FOR THE ZAMBIA WE WANT.

MADAM SPEAKER,

EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT ARE CARDINAL TO THE ATTAINMENT OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

IN THE CASE OF ZAMBIA, OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM AT ALL LEVELS OF LEARNING HAS DETERIORATED OVER THE YEARS.

THIS CALLS FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION TO RESTORE OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM TO INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS AND BEST PRACTICE.

OUR ADMINISTRATION CONSIDERS EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AS AN EQUALIZER.

WE WILL, THEREFORE, REALIGN THE SECTOR TO ENSURE THAT IT CONTRIBUTES TO JOB CREATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

MADAM SPEAKER,

OUR ADMINISTRATION WILL PROVIDE QUALITY AND EQUITABLE ACCESS TO EDUCATION FOR ALL.

WE WILL ALSO ENSURE THAT THE GIRL-CHILD HAS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY TO ACCESS EDUCATION BY ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES FACED BY FEMALE LEARNERS.

THE EDUCATION CURRICULUM WILL BE REVIEWED TO ENSURE THAT IT IS IN LINE WITH THE REQUIRED ARTISAN SKILLS AND OUR DEVELOPMENT ASPIRATIONS AND GOALS OF THE COUNTRY.

EMPHASIS WILL BE PLACED ON ENTREPRENEURSHIP WHICH WILL BE ALIGNED WITH THE CURRENT SOCIO-ECONOMIC REQUIREMENTS IN THE COUNTRY.

WE WANT TO PRODUCE GRADUATES WITH THE ABILITY TO CONTRIBUTE INNOVATIONS TO INDUSTRY, CREATE JOBS AND WEALTH.

OUR ADMINISTRATION WILL ALSO REFORM THE HIGHER EDUCATION LOAN AND BURSARY SCHEME.

THE REFORM IS AIMED AT ENSURING THAT LEARNERS WHO HAVE POTENTIAL TO EXCEL, ESPECIALLY THE GIRL-CHILD, BUT ARE UNABLE TO AFFORD TO PAY SCHOOL OR UNIVERSITY FEES ARE SUPPORTED.

THIS WILL BE A DEPARTURE FROM THE PREVAILING SITUATION WHERE WELL TO DO AND UNDESERVING STUDENTS ARE THE ONES BENEFITING.

UNDER THE NEW SYSTEM, EVERY DESERVING STUDENT WILL BE OFFERED AN OPPORTUNITY TO EDUCATION, EVEN WHEN THEY MAY BE FROM LOW FINANCIAL STATUS.

TO FURTHER IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION, WE WILL RECRUIT AND DEPLOY TEACHERS EQUITABLY TO ALL SCHOOLS ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

MADAM SPEAKER,

IN OUR ENDEAVOUR TO DEVELOP NEW TECHNOLOGIES RELEVANT FOR OUR COUNTRY, GOVERNMENT WILL FACILITATE INVESTMENT IN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.

WE WILL ALSO PLACE A PREMIUM ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY TO PROMOTE INNOVATION AND CONTRIBUTE TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

WE WILL INCREASE INVESTMENT IN SCIENCE, RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY.

GOVERNMENT WILL ALSO ENCOURAGE INVESTMENTS FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN SCIENCE, RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY.

MADAM SPEAKER,

LET ME CHALLENGE OUR SCIENTISTS, ENGINEERS, RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS AND UNIVERSITIES TO RISE TO THE OCCASION AND BEGIN TO EXPLORE POSSIBILITIES OF DEVELOPING VACCINES, MEDICINES AND APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGIES TO RESPOND TO CURRENT AND EMERGING ISSUES.

WE SHOULD NOT SIT IDLE AND MERELY WAIT FOR SOLUTIONS FROM DEVELOPED COUNTRIES WHEN WE HAVE THE CAPACITY TO DEVELOP OUR OWN SOLUTIONS.

LET US MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

MADAM SPEAKER,

INVESTMENT IN HEALTH IS KEY TO ATTAINING A HEALTHY AND PRODUCTIVE POPULATION.

HEALTH IS NOT ONLY A SOCIAL DETERMINANT BUT AN ECONOMIC COMMODITY TO ENHANCE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT.

THERE ARE, HOWEVER, INEQUALITIES IN HEALTH SERVICE DELIVERY, ESPECIALLY BETWEEN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS.

THIS CALLS FOR INSTITUTIONAL AND SYSTEMS STRENGTHENING TO ENSURE HEALTH SECURITY FOR THE NATION.

OUR ADMINISTRATION, WILL ENHANCE HEALTH CARE FINANCING TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF HEALTH SERVICE DELIVERY.

WE WILL ALSO ENSURE THAT RURAL AND URBAN COMMUNITIES ARE INVOLVED IN THE PLANNING AND DELIVERY OF HEALTH SERVICES AS CLOSER TO OUR PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE.

THIS WILL BE ACHIEVED THROUGH THE ADOPTION OF A BALANCED APPROACH BETWEEN PREVENTIVE COMMUNITY PUBLIC HEALTH AND PRIMARY HEALTH CARE ON ONE HAND, AND SECONDARY LEVEL HEALTH CARE ON THE OTHER.

IN ADDITION, WE WILL SECURE THE SUPPLY CHAIN FOR MEDICINES AND MEDICAL SUPPLIES.

WE WILL ALSO UNDERTAKE RECRUITMENT AND DEPLOYMENT OF SKILLED HUMAN RESOURCES FOR ALL HEALTH FACILITIES ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

IN ADDITION, WE WILL PROVIDE HEALTH FACILITIES WITH MODERN EQUIPMENT AND ADOPT A SYSTEMATIC APPROACH TO HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE MAINTENANCE.

OUR ADMINISTRATION WILL EQUALLY PAY PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO ADDRESSING NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES THROUGH HEALTH PROMOTION AND THE ADOPTION OF HEALTHIER LIFESTYLES AMONG OUR POPULATION.

MADAM SPEAKER,

POVERTY LEVELS AMONG OUR PEOPLE REMAIN UNACCEPTABLY HIGH.

INCOME, GENDER AS WELL AS RURAL AND URBAN INEQUALITIES CONTINUE TO EXIST.

NOTWITHSTANDING THE NUMEROUS EXISTING SOCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAMMES IMPLEMENTED BY PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATIONS, THE PROGRAMMES HAVE BEEN MARRED WITH SEVERAL CHALLENGES.

THESE INCLUDE POOR TARGETING OF BENEFICIARIES, POLITICAL INTERFERENCE AND SHORTCOMINGS IN DELIVERY MECHANISMS.

GOING FORWARD, OUR ADMINISTRATION WILL STREAMLINE THE DELIVERY OF THE EXISTING SOCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAMMES TO ENSURE THAT THEY ARE EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT.

THIS WILL ENTAIL SCALING UP AND BROADENING THE SCOPE OF COVERAGE OF THE PROGRAMMES TO ENSURE THAT MORE OF OUR VULNERABLE PEOPLE ARE PROTECTED FROM POVERTY AND DESTITUTION.

MADAM SPEAKER,

A PREMIUM WILL ALSO BE PLACED ON EMPOWERING OUR WOMEN AND YOUNG PEOPLE THROUGH EMPOWERMENT AND LIVELIHOOD PROGRAMMES.

WE WILL ALSO DEVOTE OUR EFFORTS IN PROVIDING SKILLS TRAINING FOR SELF-EMPLOYMENT AS WELL AS INCREASING ACCESS TO CREDIT, COUPLED WITH FINANCIAL LITERACY.

TO THIS END, WOMEN EMPOWERMENT WILL BE AN IMPORTANT STRATEGY FOR OVERCOMING POVERTY, MARGINALISATION AND OTHER SOCIAL ILLS.

GOVERNMENT WILL, THEREFORE, ACCELERATE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAMMES AIMED AT PROMOTING PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AND LIVELIHOOD INTERVENTIONS.

FURTHER, WOMEN REPRESENTATION IN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP, COMMERCE AND DECISION MAKING WILL BE ENHANCED.

TO HARNESS THE POTENTIAL OF OUR YOUTHFUL POPULATION TOWARDS NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, GOVERNMENT WILL CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR JOB AND WEALTH CREATION.

THIS WILL BE COMPLEMENTED BY CHANGING THE MIND-SET AND CULTURE OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE SO THAT THEY APPRECIATE THEIR VALUE AND ATTAIN THEIR FULLEST POTENTIAL.

WE WANT OUR YOUTH TO REFRAIN FROM ENGAGING IN UNPRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES.

WE WILL ALSO UPSCALE RESOURCE MOBILIZATION TO SUSTAIN THE YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMMES.

IN ADDITION, WE WILL CREATE SPECIFIC PREFERENTIAL PUBLIC PROCUREMENT PROGRAMMES TARGETING THE PURCHASE OF GOODS AND SERVICES FROM YOUTH OWNED ENTERPRISES.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO REDUCE THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DISPARITIES AMONG THE URBAN AND RURAL REGIONS,

THIS ADMINISTRATION WILL ENSURE THAT RESOURCES AND OPPORTUNITIES ARE PROVIDED EQUITABLY ACROSS THE COUNTRY BASED ON NEED AND ECONOMIC POTENTIAL.

THIS WILL GUARANTEE THAT ALL PARTS AND REGIONS OF THE COUNTRY BENEFIT FROM THE ECONOMIC AND NATURAL RESOURCES AT OUR DISPOSAL.

TO ACHIEVE THIS, OUR ADMINISTRATION WILL IMPLEMENT DELIBERATE POLICIES TO EXPLOIT THE RESOURCE ENDOWMENT FOR EACH REGION.

MADAM SPEAKER,

OUR ADMINISTRATION RECOGNISES THAT THE WATER AND SANITATION SECTOR IS KEY IN THE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA OF THE COUNTRY.

WE ARE COMMITTED TO IMPROVING WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AS WELL AS WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

TO THIS EFFECT, GOVERNMENT WILL ACCELERATE THE CONSTRUCTION OF DAMS, WATER SCHEMES AND BOREHOLES TO FACILITATE ECONOMIC

ACTIVITIES IN VARIOUS SECTORS OF THE ECONOMY AS WELL AS PROVIDE CLEAN WATER AND ADEQUATE SANITATION SERVICES FOR HOUSEHOLDS IN BOTH URBAN AND RURAL AREAS.

GOVERNMENT WILL, THEREFORE, PROGRESSIVELY INCREASE BUDGET ALLOCATION AND DISBURSEMENT TO THE WATER AND SANITATION PROGRAMMES.

GOVERNMENT WILL ALSO FACILITATE PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENT IN WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

MADAM SPEAKER

OUR GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO FOSTERING ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND PROMOTING THE GREEN ECONOMY.

A WELL-MANAGED ENVIRONMENT IS CRITICAL FOR ACHIEVING ECONOMIC RECOVERY, SUSTAINED GROWTH AND IMPROVED LIVELIHOODS FOR OUR PEOPLE.

IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT WE HAVE PLACED A PREMIUM ON DEALING WITH THE SERIOUS THREATS POSED BY CLIMATE CHANGE.

HIGH VARIABILITY, WITH FREQUENT DROUGHTS, SEASONAL AND FLASH FLOODS, EXTREME TEMPERATURES AND DRY SPELLS ARE EXPECTED TO INTENSIFY WITH CLIMATE CHANGE.

THESE HAVE ALREADY ADVERSELY IMPACTED ON FOOD, WATER AND ENERGY SECURITY AS WELL AS THE GENERAL LIVELIHOODS OF OUR PEOPLE.

TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE, OUR GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO STRENGTHENING THE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR IMPLEMENTING CLIMATE CHANGE INTERVENTIONS.

GOVERNMENT WILL ENSURE THAT LOW CARBON AND CLIMATE RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT PATHWAYS ARE PURSUED.

WITH THE PROPOSED MINISTRY OF GREEN ECONOMY AND THE ENVIRONMENT, WE WILL CHAMPION ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND IMPLEMENT POLICIES THAT WILL YIELD BENEVOLENT DIVIDENDS FOR GENERATIONS TO COME.

WE WILL ALSO IMPLEMENT INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS AND PROTOCOLS TO STRENGTHEN PROGRAMMING ON CLIMATE CHANGE.

MADAM SPEAKER,

WE WILL SAFEGUARD OUR NATURAL RESOURCES, WHICH CONSTITUTE OUR NATURAL CAPITAL AND A SOURCE OF WEALTH.

THE VAST MAJORITY OF OUR PEOPLE DEPEND ON NATURAL RESOURCES FOR FUEL, INCOME, RAW MATERIALS AND MEDICINES.

THESE RESOURCES, UNFORTUNATELY, FACE GROWING THREATS RANGING FROM HABITAT TRANSFORMATION, ENCROACHMENT, UNCONTROLLED FIRES, CLIMATE CHANGE, UNSUSTAINABLE UTILIZATION, POLLUTION TO INVASIVE SPECIES.

FURTHER, THE VALUE OF ECOSYSTEMS AND THEIR BIODIVERSITY ARE NEITHER FULLY APPRECIATED NOR TRANSLATED INTO MONETARY TERMS.

AS SUCH, WE NEED TO APPRECIATE THESE RESOURCES BY UTILISING THEM SUSTAINABLY SO AS NOT TO DEPRIVE FUTURE GENERATIONS.

OUR ADMINISTRATION WILL, THEREFORE, EMBARK ON PROMOTING THE CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY, INCLUDING ECOSYSTEMS, TO ENSURE OUR NATURAL RESOURCE CAPITAL IS NOT ERODED.

IN THIS REGARD, CONSERVATION PLANS FOR CRITICAL WETLANDS WILL BE IMPLEMENTED TO PRESERVE THE ECOSYSTEMS.

MADAM SPEAKER,

WE SHALL MAKE ZAMBIA A GLOBAL BEACON FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND INDEED A CHAMPION OF THE GREEN ECONOMY.

WE MUST SAFEGUARD ECOSYSTEMS, PROTECT NATURAL HABITATS AND KEEP CARBON OUT OF THE ATMOSPHERE.

GOOD GOVERNANCE

MADAM SPEAKER,

A CONDUCTIVE GOVERNANCE ENVIRONMENT IS IMPERATIVE FOR OUR COUNTRY'S POLITICAL STABILITY, SECURITY, ECONOMIC GROWTH AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

IT ENTAILS ENHANCED TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY, CONSULTATION AND DIALOGUE.

TO ACHIEVE THIS, OUR ADMINISTRATION WILL STRENGTHEN OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNANCE INSTITUTIONS, ENSURE THE INDEPENDENCE AND AUTONOMY OF THE JUDICIARY, AND GUARANTEE A FREE PRESS AND AN ACTIVE CIVIL SOCIETY.

WE WILL ALSO ENSURE AN IMPROVED POLICY ENVIRONMENT, STRENGTHENED PUBLIC FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AS WELL AS IMPROVED SERVICE DELIVERY AND PRODUCTIVITY.

FURTHER, WE WILL RESTORE THE RULE OF LAW AND PROTECT HUMAN RIGHTS AND PROPERTY.

MADAM SPEAKER,

OUR ADMINISTRATION ABHORS CORRUPTION.

WE HAVE A ZERO-TOLERANCE POLICY ON CORRUPTION IN ALL ITS FORMS.

WE WILL WAGE WAR ON CORRUPTION AND NOT SPARE ANY EXPENSE TO ENSURE THAT PERPETRATORS ARE MADE TO ACCOUNT FOR THEIR IMPROPRIETY.

THERE WILL BE NO SACRED COWS IN THE FIGHT. WE WILL INCREASE THE BENEFITS OF BEING HONEST AND THE COST OF BEING CORRUPT.

TO ENHANCE TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN OUR NATIONAL AFFAIRS, WE WILL REVIEW THE POLICY AND LEGAL

FRAMEWORK FOR OVERSIGHT INSTITUTIONS TO ENABLE THEM TO EFFECTIVELY FIGHT CORRUPTION AND ECONOMIC CRIMES.

WE WILL INCREASE FUNDING AND ENHANCE OPERATIONAL INDEPENDENCE OF OVERSIGHT INSTITUTIONS.

FURTHER, WE WILL INTRODUCE SPECIALISED FAST-TRACK STOLEN ASSETS RECOVERY MECHANISMS AND COURTS FOR CORRUPTION AND ECONOMIC CRIMES.

WE WILL ALSO ENACT LEGISLATION ON ETHICS AND INTEGRITY FOR IMPROVED TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY.

MADAM SPEAKER,

PART OF OUR PROGRESSIVE TRANSFORMATION AGENDA WILL INCLUDE DECENTRALISATION AND DEVOLUTION OF VARIOUS CENTRAL GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONS TO THE PROVINCES, DISTRICTS AND CONSTITUENCIES.

THIS WILL INCLUDE PUBLIC PROCUREMENT RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND MANAGEMENT THAT WILL BE BETTER MANAGED AT THE LOCAL LEVEL WITH APPRECIATION FOR LOCAL CHALLENGES.

MADAM SPEAKER,

A CONDUCTIVE POLICY AND LEGAL ENVIRONMENT IS CRITICAL TO ACHIEVING SPEEDY RECOVERY AND STABILITY OF OUR ECONOMY AS WELL AS ENSURE DEBT SUSTAINABILITY.

TO THIS EFFECT, OUR ADMINISTRATION WILL IMPLEMENT TAX AND REVENUE ADMINISTRATION REFORMS TO FACILITATE A PREDICTABLE TAX ENVIRONMENT AND ENHANCE REVENUE COLLECTION AT ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT.

WE WILL BROADEN THE TAX BASE FOR REVENUE COLLECTION AND LOWER THE INDIVIDUAL TAX BURDEN.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO ADDRESS THE EXISTING CHALLENGES IN OUR PENSION SYSTEM, WE WILL UNDERTAKE COMPREHENSIVE REFORMS IN PENSION FUND MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION.

THIS WILL RESOLVE THE PLIGHT OF PENSIONERS AND SECURE THEIR RIGHTS.

TO ENHANCE PROVISION OF FINANCIAL SERVICES TO OUR PEOPLE AND ATTRACT INVESTMENT IN THE ECONOMY, WE WILL INTRODUCE LEGISLATION TO WIDEN THE SCOPE AND LOWER THE COST OF FINANCIAL SERVICES.

IN ADDITION, WE WILL CREATE AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT THAT FACILITATES THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FINANCIAL SECTOR AND EVOLUTION TOWARDS A DIGITAL ECONOMY.

TO FURTHER IMPROVE THE GOVERNANCE ENVIRONMENT, WE WILL ENHANCE MEDIA FREEDOM AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION BY FACILITATING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MEDIA SELF-REGULATORY FRAMEWORK, AND ENACTING LEGISLATION ON ACCESS TO INFORMATION.

MADAM SPEAKER,

OVER THE YEARS, GOVERNMENT HAS ACCUMULATED MASSIVE DEBTS TO FINANCE WIDENING FISCAL DEFICITS. THESE DEBTS HAVE ACCUMULATED TO UNSUSTAINABLE LEVELS.

OUR ADMINISTRATION COMMITS ITSELF TO IMMEDIATELY STOP EXCESSIVE PUBLIC EXPENDITURE AS A WAY OF HALTING FURTHER ACCUMULATION OF DEBT.

WE WILL ENGAGE OUR CREDITORS ON DEBT RESTRUCTURING TO RESTORE SUSTAINABILITY.

FURTHER, ACCELERATED GROWTH WILL ALSO IMPROVE OUR DEBT CARRYING CAPACITY.

TO ENHANCE DEBT MANAGEMENT AND TRANSPARENCY, GOVERNMENT WILL STREAMLINE REPORTING OF DEBT TO ENSURE FULL DISCLOSURE AND STRENGTHEN PUBLIC INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT.

WE WILL REPEAL AND REPLACE THE LOANS AND GUARANTEES (AUTHORIZATION) ACT, CAP. 366 OF THE LAWS OF ZAMBIA, TO BRING IT IN LINE WITH THE CONSTITUTION.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO IMPROVE PRODUCTIVITY AND SERVICE DELIVERY, OUR ADMINISTRATION WILL ENSURE THAT WE HAVE A DEDICATED AND PROFESSIONAL PUBLIC SERVICE.

TO THIS EFFECT, WE WILL DE-POLITICISE APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTIONS AND IMPROVE LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT COMPETENCES.

WE WILL IMPLEMENT CHANGE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMMES IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE TO ENSURE AN OPTIMAL SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM.

IN ADDITION, WE WILL REFORM THE SERVICE COMMISSIONS TO ENHANCE THEIR INDEPENDENCE AND PROFESSIONALISM.

WE WANT THE COMMISSIONS TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC SERVICE FROM UNWARRANTED POLITICAL INTERFERENCE, IN LINE WITH THEIR MANDATE.

WE WILL ENSURE THAT THE MERIT PRINCIPLE IS STRICTLY ADHERED TO IN APPOINTMENTS AND PLACEMENTS.

WE MUST GET BACK TO A TIME WHEN OUR PUBLIC SERVICE INSTITUTIONS WERE STRONG. WE MUST REGAIN PUBLIC CONFIDENCE.

WE ARE ALSO COMMITTED TO ACTUALISING OUR NATIONAL ASPIRATIONS FOR A DECENTRALISED GOVERNANCE SYSTEM AS ENSHRINED IN OUR CONSTITUTION.

GOVERNMENT WILL, THEREFORE, ACCELERATE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DECENTRALISATION OF FUNCTIONS FROM CENTRAL GOVERNMENT TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES WITH MATCHING RESOURCES.

WE WILL STRENGTHEN THE CAPACITY OF OUR LOCAL AUTHORITIES TO ENABLE THEM COLLECT THEIR REVENUES AND DELIVER PUBLIC SERVICES TO OUR PEOPLE IN AN EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT MANNER.

MADAM SPEAKER,

OUR ADMINISTRATION WILL ENHANCE ACCESS TO JUSTICE, ENSURE STRICT ADHERENCE TO THE RULE OF LAW AND UPHOLDING OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

WE WILL SAFEGUARD THE RIGHTS OF OUR PEOPLE AND PROTECT PRIVATE PROPERTY.

TO THIS EFFECT, WE WILL STRENGTHEN AND MODERNISE OUR INSTITUTIONS OF GOVERNANCE TO GUARANTEE SECURITY, FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS, CIVIL LIBERTIES AND QUICK DISPENSATION OF JUSTICE.

MADAM SPEAKER,

THE SEPARATION OF POWERS AMONG THE THREE ARMS OF GOVERNMENT IS ESSENTIAL TO THE UPHOLDING OF THE CONSTITUTION AND THE RULE OF LAW.

IN THIS REGARD, OUR ADMINISTRATION WILL STRENGTHEN AND PRESERVE THE INTEGRITY OF THE PRINCIPLE OF SEPARATION OF POWERS AMONG THE EXECUTIVE, THE LEGISLATURE AND THE JUDICIARY, AS PROVIDED FOR IN OUR CONSTITUTION.

WITH RESPECT TO THE CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS, GOVERNMENT WILL COMPLETE THE CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM AGENDA, ANCHORED ON A BROAD-BASED CONSENSUS AMONG ALL ZAMBIANS.

FURTHER, WE WILL REVIVE THE PROCESS OF EXPANDING THE BILL OF RIGHTS TO INTEGRATE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS.

MADAM SPEAKER,

OUR DEMOCRACY HAS BECOME A SHINING EXAMPLE ON THE CONTINENT AND THE WORLD AT LARGE AS EVIDENCED BY THE JUST ENDED GENERAL ELECTIONS AND THE PEACEFUL TRANSITION.

OUR ADMINISTRATION WILL, THEREFORE, CONTINUE TO PROMOTE AND ENTRENCH THE TENETS OF DEMOCRACY.

TO FURTHER ENTRENCH OUR DEMOCRACY, WE WILL IMPLEMENT ELECTORAL REFORMS TO STRENGTHEN THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION OF ZAMBIA.

WE WILL ALSO REFORM THE PUBLIC ORDER ACT TO FACILITATE ITS FAIR APPLICATION AND PREVENT ABUSE.

MADAM SPEAKER,

WITH RESPECT TO INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND FOREIGN RELATIONS, ZAMBIA WILL EFFECTIVELY ENGAGE AT BILATERAL, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS TO MAXIMISE THE BENEFITS THAT ACCRUE TO THE COUNTRY.

TO THIS EFFECT, GOVERNMENT WILL PURSUE ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY.

WE WILL PROMOTE REGIONAL ECONOMIC INTEGRATION OF OUR CONTINENT.

WE WILL PROMOTE PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF CONFLICTS.

WE WILL ENSURE EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION OF OUR CITIZENS AND OTHER AFRICAN NATIONALS IN MULTILATERAL AGENCIES.

WE WILL CREATE A PROFESSIONAL FOREIGN SERVICE TO ENSURE EFFECTIVE REPRESENTATION OF THE COUNTRY'S INTERESTS IN ALL OUR FOREIGN MISSIONS.

MADAM SPEAKER,

ADHERENCE TO NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES DOES NOT ONLY PROMOTE PATRIOTISM, PEACE AND UNITY AMONG OUR PEOPLE, BUT ALSO CREATES A POSITIVE INFLUENCE ON WORK ETHICS AND PRODUCTIVITY.

IN ADDITION, ADHERENCE TO OUR NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES WILL CREATE A CONDUCIVE ENVIRONMENT TO ATTRACT INVESTMENTS THAT LEAD TO HIGHER GROWTH AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR CITIZENS.

EFFORTS TOWARDS ENTRENCHMENT OF OUR NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES WILL, THEREFORE, CONTINUE.

WE WANT EVERY ZAMBIAN TO BE AN EMBODIMENT OF OUR NATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES.

WE WILL MAKE THE NATIONAL MOTTO OF “ONE ZAMBIA, ONE NATION” A REALITY ONCE AGAIN.

MADAM SPEAKER,

WE RECOGNISE THE IMPORTANT ROLE THAT OUR TRADITIONAL LEADERS, THE CHURCH AND CIVIL SOCIETY PLAY IN THE GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF OUR NATION.

TO THIS EFFECT, WE WILL UNDERTAKE POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE REFORMS TO ENHANCE THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO BEGIN TO ACTUALIZE THE POLICY MEASURES I HAVE OUTLINED UNDER THE THEMATIC AREAS OF ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION AND JOB CREATION, HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE ENVIRONMENT,

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE WILL SOON BE PRESENTING THE 2022 NATIONAL BUDGET TO THIS AUGUST HOUSE.

I, THEREFORE, URGE THE HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF THIS AUGUST HOUSE TO SUPPORT THE BUDGET.

CONCLUSION

MADAM SPEAKER,

ON 12TH AUGUST, 2021, OUR PEOPLE SOUNDED THE TRUMPET OF CHANGE.

A TRUMPET SUMMONING ALL OF US TO NATIONAL DUTY.

A DUTY TO RESTORE OUR ECONOMY AND SAFEGUARD THE LIVELIHOODS OF OUR PEOPLE.

A DUTY TO ATTAIN A TRULY UNITED, EQUITABLE AND PROSPEROUS COUNTRY.

A DUTY TO STAND FOR AND UPHOLD THE RULE OF LAW.

WE MUST ALL ACT IN HARMONY TO MOVE OUR COUNTRY FORWARD AND ACHIEVE THE MUCH-NEEDED ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION.

INDEED, OUR BEST YEARS AS A NATION ARE TRULY WITHIN OUR REACH.

THE WILL, COURAGE, ENERGY AND FAITH WE GARNER FOR OUR TRANSFORMATION, WILL SECURE US THE SUCCESS WE ALL DESIRE TO ACHIEVE.

HARD WORK, DISCIPLINE AND PERSEVERANCE MUST BE OUR BEDROCK.

INDEED, THE CLASSICAL GREEK WRITER, EURIPIDES WAS RIGHT WHEN HE SAID AND I QUOTE, “MUCH EFFORT, MUCH PROSPERITY”, END OF QUOTE.

THIS IS THE ONLY WAY WE WILL MOVE FORWARD AS A COUNTRY.

MADAM SPEAKER,

WE MUST PUT SERVICE ABOVE SELF AND THE INTEREST OF THE COUNTRY BEFORE OUR OWN INTERESTS.

LET US TAKE INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE COMMON GOOD.

WE MUST PROMOTE PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE AND PUT AN END TO VIOLENCE AGAINST EACH OTHER.

IT IS ONLY IN PEACE AND UNITY THAT WE CAN PLAN AND ACTUALIZE PERSONAL AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

IT IS ONLY IN PEACE AND UNITY THAT OUR CHILDREN CAN ENJOY THEIR CHILDHOOD AND GROW UP INTO RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS.

IT IS ONLY IN PEACE AND UNITY THAT WE CAN BUILD MEANINGFUL RELATIONS WITH NATURE, FELLOW HUMAN BEINGS AND THE ALMIGHTY GOD.

LET THE RIVERS AND WATERS OF PEACE AND UNITY WASH AWAY ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE FROM OUR LAND.

THIS IS WHAT OUR FOUNDING FATHER, DR. KENNETH DAVID KAUNDA, OVERWHELMINGLY DEMONSTRATED.

WHEN WE WORK TO THE BEST OF OUR ABILITY, OUR DREAMS BECOME A REALITY.

WHEN WE WORK TOGETHER AS A PEOPLE, NOTHING CAN STOP US FROM ACHIEVING OUR DREAMS.

WHEN WE LIVE A LIFE OF SERVICE TO THE NATION, OUR LEGACY LIVES ON.

LET US EMULATE DR. KAUNDA AND WORK HARD TO MAKE ZAMBIA A BETTER PLACE FOR ALL.

THIS IS POSSIBLE AND TOGETHER WE WILL MAKE ZAMBIA A BETTER PLACE FOR ALL.

LET US CREATE A UNITED, PROSPEROUS AND EQUITABLE ZAMBIA.

THE FUTURE OF OUR COUNTRY LIES IN OUR HANDS.

MADAM SPEAKER,

IT IS NOW MY SINGULAR HONOUR AND PRIVILEGE TO DECLARE THE FIRST SESSION OF THE THIRTEENTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OFFICIALLY OPENED.

MAY GOD BLESS US ALL AND CONTINUE TO KEEP US SAFE.

MAY GOD BLESS THE WORKS OF OUR HANDS.

MAY GOD BLESS OUR CHRISTIAN NATION, ZAMBIA.

MADAM SPEAKER,

I THANK YOU.