



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

SPEECH

for the

**OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE SECOND SESSION OF THE
THIRTEENTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

by

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FRIDAY, 9TH SEPTEMBER, 2022

INTRODUCTION

MADAM SPEAKER,

WE ARE DELIGHTED TO ADDRESS THIS HONORABLE HOUSE ON THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE SECOND SESSION OF THE THIRTEENTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.

OUR ADDRESS THIS MORNING COMES OFF THE BACKDROP OF OUR FIRST ANNIVERSARY AS THE NEW DAWN ADMINISTRATION, AND WE ACKNOWLEDGE THE SUPPORT GIVEN TO OUR LEADERSHIP BY THE ZAMBIAN PEOPLE DURING OUR **SUCCESSFUL** FIRST YEAR IN OFFICE.

MADAM SPEAKER,

BEFORE WE PROCEED WITH OUR ADDRESS, WE REQUEST THAT THIS HOUSE BE UPSTANDING AND OBSERVE A MOMENT OF SILENCE IN HONOUR OF THE LIFE, SERVICE AND MEMORY OF HER MAJESTY, QUEEN ELIZABETH II, OF THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE COMMONWEALTH, WHO PASSED ON YESTERDAY, 8TH SEPTEMBER, 2022.

HER MAJESTY WAS AND SHALL FOREVER BE REMEMBERED AS A SYMBOL OF CONTINUITY, STABILITY, UNITY AND SERVICE NOT JUST IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE COMMONWEALTH, BUT IN THE ENTIRE GLOBAL COMMUNITY.

WE ALSO WISH TO HONOUR AND REMEMBER THE LIFE, SERVICE AND MEMORY OF OUR FOURTH REPUBLICAN PRESIDENT, HIS EXCELLENCY RUPIAH BWEZANI BANDA, WHO PASSED AWAY ON 11TH MARCH, 2022. HIS EXCELLENCY RUPIAH BWEZANI BANDA SERVED OUR COUNTRY AND OUR PEOPLE WITH UTMOST HONOUR, HUMILITY AND DISTINCTION.

MAY THEIR SOULS REST IN ETERNAL PEACE.

MADAM SPEAKER,

WE WOULD LIKE TO COMMEND YOU AND YOUR TWO DEPUTY SPEAKERS FOR THE IMPARTIAL MANNER IN WHICH YOU PRESIDED OVER THE BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE DURING THE FIRST SESSION.

IN THE SAME BREATH, WE WISH TO COMMEND HER HONOUR THE VICE-PRESIDENT FOR THE EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE MANNER IN WHICH GOVERNMENT BUSINESS WAS CONDUCTED DURING THE LAST SESSION OF THIS **PEOPLE'S NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**.

WE ALSO ACKNOWLEDGE THE OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOR FACILITATING THE SMOOTH TRANSACTION OF BUSINESS IN THE HOUSE DURING THE LAST SESSION.

MADAM SPEAKER,

WE ARE THRILLED TO NOTE THAT DURING THE FIRST SESSION OF THE THIRTEENTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, THE HOUSE PASSED **25** BILLS AND CONSIDERED **42** COMMITTEE REPORTS AS WELL AS **390** QUESTIONS – A COMMENDABLE ACHIEVEMENT.

THEME OF THE ADDRESS

MADAM SPEAKER,

DURING THE PAST ONE YEAR, THE NEW DAWN ADMINISTRATION PRIORITISED THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC INTERVENTIONS AIMED AT STABILISING, REPAIRING AND REVIVING OUR ECONOMY.

WE ARE IN OFFICE TO IMPROVE THE WELFARE AND WELLBEING OF THE ZAMBIAN PEOPLE, WITH A CLEAR INTENT AND RESOLVE TO ACHIEVE WHAT WE SAID WE WOULD FOR THIS COUNTRY AND ITS PEOPLE.

IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT WE HAVE PRIORITISED FISCAL DISCIPLINE, THROUGH ENHANCED TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY, TO PROTECT PUBLIC RESOURCES, AS WELL AS SERVE THE ZAMBIAN PEOPLE WITH A SENSE OF HUMILITY, CLARITY AND DILIGENCE.

OUR FOCUS HAS BEEN AND REMAINS THAT OF TRANSFORMING OUR COUNTRY INTO AN INDUSTRIALISED NATION, WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF CITIZENS AND IN PARTNESRHIP WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR, TO SYSTEMATICALLY UNLOCK VARIOUS ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES TO DELIVER INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT, JOBS AND IMPROVED LIVELIHOODS FOR OUR PEOPLE.

MADAM SPEAKER,

THE THEME FOR OUR ADDRESS THIS MORNING IS, THEREFORE, **“WORKING TOGETHER TOWARDS SOCIO-ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION: STIMULATING ECONOMIC GROWTH FOR IMPROVED LIVELIHOODS”**.

THROUGH OUR **BOLD AND DECISIVE** DECISION MAKING, WE ARE RELENTLESSLY WORKING TOWARDS ACTUALISING THE ASPIRATIONS OF OUR NATIONAL VISION 2030, OF TRANSFORMING OUR COUNTRY INTO A PROSPEROUS MIDDLE-INCOME NATION, AND CATAPULT OUR ECONOMY ONTO A HIGHER, INCLUSIVE SOCIO – ECONOMIC GROWTH TRAJECTORY.

MACRO-ECONOMIC SITUATION

MADAM SPEAKER,

OUR GOVERNMENT INHERITED A BROKEN ECONOMY.

GROWTH HAD CONTRACTED TO -2.8% IN 2020, FROM AN AVERAGE OF 6% A DECADE AGO.

THE COUNTRY HAD A RUNAWAY INFLATION RATE THAT HAD SPIKED TO 22% IN 2021.

THE EXCHANGE RATE HAD DETERIORATED TO K22/\$1 BY JULY OF 2021.

THE FINANCIAL SECTOR WAS GRIPPED BY EXHOBITANTLY HIGH LENDING RATES AND TIGHT LIQUIDITY, MAKING IT COSTLY FOR INDIVIDUALS AND BUSINESSES TO ACCESS FINANCING.

OUR NATIONAL FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVES HAD BEEN DECIMATED TO **1.9 MONTHS OF IMPORT COVER – WAY BELOW THE INTERNATIONALLY RECOMMENDED THRESHOLD OF THREE MONTHS IMPORT COVER.**

FISCAL MANAGEMENT WAS EXCESSSIVELY DEFICIENT, AND WAS CHARACTERISED BY POOR RESOURCE ALLOCATION, RECKLESS BORROWING WHICH INCREASED THE COST OF DEBT SERVICE – **RESULTING IN DEBT DEFAULTS.**

MADAM SPEAKER,

IN ONE SENTENCE: WE HAD FAILED TO MANAGE OUR ECONOMY.

MADAM SPEAKER,

DESPITE THIS DAMAGING BACKGROUND, OUR GOVERNMENT, HAS WITHIN A YEAR, MANAGED TO STABILISE THE ECONOMY.

WE HAVE PUT BACK OUR ECONOMY ON A POSITIVE GROWTH TRAJECTORY, AND WE PROJECT THE ECONOMY TO GROW AT AN AVERAGE OF 4% IN THE MEDIUM TERM.

WE HAVE CONSISTENTLY SUBDUED INFLATION FROM A HIGH OF **25.6%** IN AUGUST 2021, TO A SINGLE DIGIT OF **9.8%** AS AT AUGUST 2022 – **PUTTING US ON COURSE TO ACHIEVING OUR TARGETED INFLATION OF 6% - 8% RANGE FOR THE MEDIUM TERM.**

WE HAVE STABILISED THE EXCHANGE RATE AGAINST MAJOR CONVERTIBLE CURRENCIES, MAKING IT ONE OF THE BEST PERFORMING CURRENCIES IN THE WORLD.

WE HAVE BUILT BACK FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVES TO **3.7 MONTHS** OF IMPORT COVER AS AT END OF JUNE 2022, ENOUGH TO ABSORB ANY EXTERNAL SHOCKS AND GIVE ASSURANCE TO INVESTORS TO CONTINUE INVESTING IN OUR COUNTRY.

MADAM SPEAKER,

IN ONE YEAR OF OUR BEING IN OFFICE, WE HAVE MANAGED TO STABILISE THE ECONOMY AND ARE NOW FOCUSED ON RESOLVING ONE OF BIGGEST ECONOMIC CHALLENGE – **THE DEBT CRISIS.**

WITH THE SUPPORT OF OUR DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS UNDER THE G20 COMMON FRAMEWORK, THE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND (IMF) HAS APPROVED SUPPORT TOWARDS ZAMBIA'S HOME-GROWN ECONOMIC PROGRAMME, WHICH PUTS US ON COURSE TO RESTRUCTURING OUR DEBT.

THIS WILL FREE UP THE MUCH-NEEDED RESOURCES TO SUPPORT OUR LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENDA AS ESPOUSED IN THE 8TH NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN.

MADAM SPEAKER,

BEING IN THE CHAMPIONS LEAGUE IS NOT ENOUGH. WE MUST NOW REMODEL OURSELVES INTO BEING A RESPONSIBLE PARTICIPANT IN THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS BY MEETING OUR DEBT OBLIGATIONS, AND THEREFORE, REQUEST THE SUPPORT OF ALL OUR CREDITORS SO THAT WE CAN ACHIEVE OUR LAST MILE IN RESTRUCTURING OUR NATIONAL DEBT.

OUR GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO ENSURING CONTINUED PRUDENT FISCAL MANAGEMENT BY REFORMING OUR PUBLIC FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS AND LAWS, AS WELL AS ENHANCING TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY.

MADAM SPEAKER,

IN ORDER TO ENTRENCH OUR HOMEGROWN REFORM PROGRAMME AND SET OUR COUNTRY'S STRATEGIC DIRECTION, WE OFFICIALLY LAUNCHED THE EIGHTH NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (8NDP) 2022-2026 UNDER THE THEME "SOCIAL ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION FOR IMPROVED LIVELIHOODS".

MADAM SPEAKER,

THE FOCUS OF OUR 8NDP IS TO RESTORE MACROECONOMIC STABILITY BY RAISING REAL GDP GROWTH, AS WELL AS ATTAINING DEBT AND FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY TO IMPROVE THE LIVELIHOODS OF THE ZAMBIAN PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY THE MOST VULNERABLE.

ANCHORED ON THE 8NDP, THE HONOURABLE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND NATIONAL PLANNING WILL, AT THE END OF THIS MONTH, PRESENT TO THIS AUGUST HOUSE, THE 2023 NATIONAL BUDGET, WHICH SHALL OUTLINE SPECIFIC MACRO-ECONOMIC OBJECTIVES THAT GOVERNMENT SEEKS TO ACHIEVE, AS WELL AS KEY DEVELOPMENTAL INTERVENTIONS TO BE IMPLEMENTED IN 2023.

WE URGE YOU, HONOURABLE MEMBERS, TO SUPPORT THE BUDGET.

MADAM SPEAKER,

MAY WE NOW HIGHLIGHT THE POLICY MEASURES TO BE IMPLEMENTED IN THE COMING YEAR, UNDER THE FOUR STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT AREAS OF THE 8NDP, NAMELY, **ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION AND JOB CREATION, HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE ENVIRONMENT.**

ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION AND JOB CREATION

MADAM SPEAKER,

IN ORDER TO TRANSFORM OUR ECONOMY AND CREATE JOBS AND WEALTH FOR OUR PEOPLE, WE SHALL CONTINUE TO PURSUE EFFORTS AIMED AT INCREASING BOTH LOCAL AND FOREIGN INVESTMENTS, PRODUCTION, PRODUCTIVITY, VALUE ADDITION AND TRADE, AS WELL AS ENSURING THAT OUR CITIZENS PARTICIPATE AND BENEFIT FULLY FROM ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES.

IN THIS REGARD, OUR ADMINISTRATION HAS PRIORITISED AGRICULTURE, MINING, MANUFACTURING AND TOURISM, AS KEY DRIVERS TO ACHIEVING ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION; WHILE CONSIDERING ENERGY, TRANSPORT, INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY - AS WELL AS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT, AS KEY ENABLERS OF THIS TRANSFORMATION AGENDA.

MADAM SPEAKER,

THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR CONTINUES TO BE THE MAJOR SOURCE OF LIVELIHOOD FOR OUR PEOPLE – PROVIDING FOOD AND EMPLOYMENT

OPPORTUNITIES, RAW MATERIALS TO INDUSTRIES, AS WELL AS BRINGING IN THE MUCH-NEEDED FOREIGN EXCHANGE INTO OUR COUNTRY.

THE SECTOR, HOWEVER, CONTINUES TO GRAPPLE WITH A NUMBER OF CHALLENGES, NOTABLY CLIMATE CHANGE RELATED DROUGHTS AND FLOODS, OUTBREAK OF ANIMAL DISEASES, INSUFFICIENT UTILISATION OF IRRIGATION MECHANISMS, INADEQUATE EXTENSION SERVICES' PROVISION RESULTING IN LOW PRODUCTIVITY – ESPECIALLY AMONG OUR SMALL-SCALE FARMERS.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO ADDRESS THE FOREGOING CHALLENGES, GOVERNMENT HAS INSTITUTED A NUMBER OF MEASURES, AMONG THEM, ENHANCED SURVEILLANCE, EXTENSION SERVICES, PROMOTING AGRICULTURE DIVERSIFICATION, IRRIGATION DEVELOPMENT AND EXTENSION SERVICES.

WE ARE PROMOTING CLIMATE SMART AGRICULTURE.

GOVERNMENT HAS ALSO COMMENCED THE FORMULATION OF A COMPREHENSIVE AGRICULTURE SUPPORT PROGRAMME, WHICH WILL TRANSFORM THE SECTOR, IMPROVE **SECTOR-WIDE** PRODUCTIVITY AND SUBSTANTIALLY IMPROVE THE LIVELIHOODS OF OUR PEOPLE.

MADAM SPEAKER,

DURING OUR ADDRESS TO THIS AUGUST HOUSE IN SEPTEMBER, 2021, WE PROMISED THAT OUR ADMINISTRATION WILL WORK WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN EXPLOITING OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE IN THE REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL MARKETS, WITH MARKET ACCESS AGREEMENTS WITH CHINA AND SOUTH AFRICA, FOR THE EXPORT OF BLUEBERRIES, HAVING ALREADY BEEN SIGNED.

WE ARE WALKING THE TALK.

FURTHER, WE HAVE MET THE PHYTOSANITARY REQUIREMENTS FOR THE EXPORT OF PLANT AND PLANT PRODUCTS, SUCH AS AVOCADO, PASSION FRUIT, PEAS AND FRESH CUT FLOWERS TO THE EUROPEAN UNION MARKET.

WE HAVE ALSO MET THE REQUIREMENTS FOR EXPORTING AVOCADO TO THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, MACADAMIA NUTS AND PEAS TO SOUTH AFRICA, AS WELL AS MEETING REQUIREMENTS FOR THE EXPORT OF STEVIA AND SOYA BEAN MEAL TO CHINA, BLACK CARROTS TO GERMANY AND TIMBER TO CHINA AND VIETNAM.

WE URGE OUR FARMERS TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THESE AVAILABLE OPPORTUNITIES BY PRODUCING MORE HORTICULTURAL PRODUCE TO ENSURE RELIABLE AND SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY, WHILE GOVERNMENT WORKS TO EXPAND MARKET CHANNELS FOR OUR LOCAL PRODUCE.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO TURN AROUND THE MINING SECTOR, OUR ADMINISTRATION IS CREATING A CONDUCIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR INCREASED INVESTMENT AND PARTICIPATION OF OUR PEOPLE IN THE SECTOR, WHILE POSITIONING THE COUNTRY TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES IN MINING VALUE CHAINS AT LOCAL, REGIONAL AND GLOBAL LEVEL.

THE CONDUCIVE AND PREDICTABLE POLICY ENVIRONMENT UNLOCKED THE LANDMARK INVESTMENT OF **US\$1.35 BILLION** FOR THE ENTERPRISE NICKEL PROJECT IN KALUMBILA DISTRICT AND EXPANSION AT KANSANSHI MINE IN SOLWEZI DISTRICT - A CLEAR TESTAMENT OF OUR EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE MINING SECTOR, CREATE JOBS AND WEALTH FOR OUR PEOPLE AND THE COMMUNITIES THEY LIVE IN.

THE NICKEL PROJECT AND THE EXTENSION OF THE MINING LIFE AT KANSANSHI, FOR THE NEXT 20 YEARS, WILL NOT ONLY CONTRIBUTE TO ECONOMIC GROWTH BUT ALSO PROVIDE AND SECURE THE MUCH-NEEDED JOBS FOR OUR PEOPLE.

MADAM SPEAKER,

OUR GOVERNMENT, **THE PEOPLE'S GOVERNMENT**, HAS SIGNED A COOPERATION AGREEMENT WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO TO DEVELOP THE ELECTRIC MOTOR VEHICLE BATTERY VALUE CHAIN – ENVISAGED TO HUGELY CONTRIBUTE TO THE

ATTAINMENT OF OUR DEVELOPMENT GOALS, INCLUDING THE CREATION OF MORE JOBS FOR OUR CITIZENS.

THROUGH FORMALISATION, CAPACITY BUILDING AS WELL AS PROVISION OF EXTENSION AND TECHNICAL SERVICES, OUR ADMINISTRATION HAS PRIORITISED THE REORGANISATION OF ARTISANAL AND SMALL-SCALE MINING IN OUR ENDEAVOUR TO INCREASE THE PARTICIPATION OF CITIZENS IN THE MINING SECTOR.

WE ARE ALSO ADDRESSING ALL IRREGULARITIES IN THIS SUB-SECTOR IN ORDER TO END ILLEGAL MINING, AND ENSURE THAT THE COUNTRY BENEFITS FROM THIS RICH ENDOWMENT.

OTHER THAN THIS, WE ARE ALSO MOVING TO ESTABLISHING MARKET HUBS FOR MANGANESE TO PROVIDE EASY MARKET FOR ARTISANAL AND SMALL-SCALE MINERS.

MADAM SPEAKER,

GOVERNMENT REMAINS COMMITTED TO ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES AFFECTING THE OPERATIONS AT KONKOLA AND MOPANI COPPER MINES, AND MEASURES ARE BEING TAKEN TO SAFEGUARD JOBS FOR OUR PEOPLE AND SIGNIFICANTLY TURN AROUND PRODUCTION AROUND THE TWO ASSETS.

IN AN EFFORT TO PROVIDE A FAVOURABLE ENVIRONMENT FOR INCREASED INVESTMENT IN MINING AND DOWNSTREAM ACTIVITIES, GOVERNMENT SHALL REVIEW THE MINERAL RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT POLICY, WHILE POSITIONING THE SECTOR TO CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS OUR COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION AGENDA.

MADAM SPEAKER,

OUR GOVERNMENT HAS RECENTLY LAUNCHED THE PUBLIC PRIVATE DIALOGUE FORUM FOR DEVELOPMENT (**PPDF**) IN A VIGOROUS BID TO STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR, AND SCALE UP EFFORTS TO CREATE AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR INDUSTRIALISATION AND TRADE, JOBS AND WEALTH CREATION FOR OUR PEOPLE.

THE FORUM IS A STRATEGIC PLATFORM FOR CONSTRUCTIVE ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO ADDRESS CRITICAL SECTOR-SPECIFIC CONSTRAINTS TO PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT, AND WE URGE CROSS – CUTTING COLLABORATION AND WORKING TOGETHER IN TRANSLATING THIS JOURNEY INTO REAL RESULTS FOR OUR CITIZENS.

WE CALL UPON THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OUR ADMINISTRATION'S OPEN-DOOR POLICY AND ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN THE FULL UTILISATION OF THIS PLATFORM.

MADAM SPEAKER,

IN FULL RECOGNITION THAT SMALL AND MEDIUM BUSINESS ENTERPRISES ARE KEY CONTRIBUTORS TO JOB AND WEALTH CREATION, GOVERNMENT ALLOCATED RESOURCES TO THE ZAMBIA CREDIT GUARANTEE SCHEME.

THIS HAS RESULTED INTO OVER **120** SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES BEING SUPPORTED WITH GUARANTEES TO ENABLE THEM ACCESS FINANCING FROM COMMERCIAL BANKS, AS WELL AS SUPPORTING BENEFICIARIES WITH BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SERVICES.

IN ADDITION, WE HAVE ALSO ALLOCATED MORE RESOURCES TO THE CITIZENS ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT COMMISSION FOR ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT, WITH **K365 MILLION** WORTH OF EMPOWERMENT PRODUCTS TARGETED AT CITIZENS, MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM SCALE ENTERPRISES AS WELL AS COOPERATIVES, WHILE THE COMMISSION HAS ALSO SET ASIDE **K83.9 MILLION** TO OPERATIONALISE INDUSTRIAL YARDS ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

FURTHER, UNDER THE CONSTITUENCY DEVELOPMENT FUND, ALLOCATIONS HAVE ALSO BEEN MADE TO EMPOWER MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES AND COOPERATIVES.

MADAM SPEAKER,

GOVERNMENT, WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE WORLD BANK, IS IMPLEMENTING THE ZAMBIA AGRIBUSINESS AND TRADE PROJECT, WITH

THE PROJECT ASSISTING SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES TO GROW THROUGH MULTI-FACETED INTERVENTIONS.

A GOOD EXAMPLE IS FOREST AFRICA ZAMBIA LIMITED, A CHILANGA BASED ENTERPRISE THAT IS PROCESSING **MABUYU** AND **NGAI** WILD FRUITS INTO BEVERAGES OF UP TO **12,000** LITRES PER MONTH, PROVIDING A STEADY MARKET FOR PEOPLE HARVESTING THESE WILD FRUITS, INCLUDING OUTGROWERS.

FOLLOWING THE SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS PROJECT, GOVERNMENT IS LOOKING TO SCALE UP THE MODEL TO COVER THE WHOLE COUNTRY, AND EMPOWER AND CREATE JOBS FOR OUR PEOPLE – **ESPECIALLY THE YOUTH.**

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO FACILITATE TRADE, INCLUDING SMOOTH CLEARANCE OF GOODS, GOVERNMENT HAS CONTINUED TO IMPROVE AND MODERNISE BORDER INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSFORM THEM INTO ONE-STOP BORDER POSTS, WITH SAKANIA, KAMBIMBA, KIPUSHI AND CHALWE WITH THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO, MWAMI WITH MALAWI, CHANIDA WITH MOZAMBIQUE, AND NAKONDE WITH TANZANIA ALL EARMARKED FOR URGENT MODERNISATION.

MADAM SPEAKER,

BEING ANOTHER PRIORITY SECTOR IN OUR ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION AND JOB CREATION AGENDA, TOURISM HAS, THIS YEAR, RECORDED FAVOURABLE PERFORMANCE IN COMPARISON TO LAST YEAR, WITH THE NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL TOURIST ARRIVALS INCREASED SUBSTANTIALLY FROM AROUND **240,000** IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2021 TO NEARLY **496,500** IN THE CORRESPONDING PERIOD THIS YEAR.

THIS INCREASE IS ATTRIBUTED TO A NUMBER OF FACTORS, INCLUDING RELAXATION OF COVID-19 TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS, AS WELL AS REDUCED VISA FEES; WITH THE LATTER BEING UNDERTAKEN IN CONSULTATION WITH OTHER STAKEHOLDERS.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO REDUCE THE COST ASSOCIATED WITH THE ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATIONS OF TOURISM ENTERPRISES IN OUR COUNTRY, GOVERNMENT SHALL INTRODUCE A SINGLE LICENSING SYSTEM FOR THE TOURISM SECTOR.

GOVERNMENT SHALL ALSO UPGRADE TOURISM SITES, AS WELL AS INFRASTRUCTURE LEADING TO SITES SUCH AS THE KASABA BAY IN NSUMBU NATIONAL PARK IN THE NORTHERN CIRCUIT AND THE LIUWA NATIONAL PARK IN THE SOUTHERN CIRCUIT.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO RURAL COMMUNITIES, GOVERNMENT, AS AT JUNE, 2022, HAD REHABILITATED AND MAINTAINED OVER **1,000** KILOMETERS OF RURAL ROADS IN CENTRAL, NORTHERN, LUAPULA AND EASTERN PROVINCES. WORKS WILL COMMENCE IN MUCHINGA, SOUTHERN, WESTERN, NORTH-WESTERN AND COPPERBELT PROVINCES, WHILE THE TARGET REMAINS THAT OF REHABILITATING AND MAINTAINING **4,464** KILOMETERS OF ROADS BY 2025.

TO IMPROVE THE OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY OF THE RAILWAY SUB - SECTOR, GOVERNMENT IS IN THE PROCESS OF IMPROVING THE OPERATIONS OF TANZANIA-ZAMBIA RAILWAY AUTHORITY AS WELL AS IMPROVING THE INFRASTRUCTURE OF ZAMBIA RAILWAYS.

MADAM SPEAKER,

LIFTED BY TRAVEL DEMAND FOLLOWING THE DECLINE IN GLOBAL COVID-19 INFECTIONS, THE AVIATION SUB-SECTOR IS NOW SHOWING SIGNS OF RECOVERY, WITH GENERAL PASSENGER MOVEMENT RECORDED AT JUST UNDER **680,000** IN THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF 2022, COMPARED TO JUST UNDER **290,000** OVER THE SAME PERIOD IN 2021.

WHILE THE REINTRODUCTION OF ZAMBIA AIRWAYS SHOULD IMPROVE DOMESTIC AND REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY THROUGH AIR TRANSPORT, WE MUST BE COMPETITIVE AND ECONOMICALLY VIABLE IN THIS AREA.

MADAM SPEAKER,

ELECTRICITY AND PETROLEUM PRODUCTS CONTINUE TO BE CRITICAL ENABLERS FOR THE INDUSTRIAL GROWTH AND TRANSFORMATION OF OUR COUNTRY'S ECONOMY, AND AS SUCH, IT IS A KEY POLICY OBJECTIVE OF OUR NEW DAWN ADMINISTRATION – **YOUR NEW DAWN ADMINISTRATION**, TO ENSURE STABILITY, AVAILABILITY AND AFFORDABILITY OF SUPPLY FOR OUR PEOPLE AND BUSINESSES ALIKE.

WE HAVE INCREASED ELECTRICITY GENERATION TO **10.8** MILLION MEGAWATT HOURS DURING THE FIRST HALF OF THE YEAR, FROM **9.9** MILLION MEGAWATT HOURS IN THE CORRESPONDING PERIOD IN 2021, WITH THE INCREASE LARGELY ATTRIBUTED TO THE RISE IN WATER LEVELS AND THE COMMISSIONING OF SOME OF THE GENERATOR UNITS AT KAFUE GORGE LOWER HYDRO-POWER STATION.

AS A RESULT, WE HAVE INCREASED ELECTRICITY GENERATION TO SUPPLY LOCALLY AND SUPPORT EXPORTS TO COUNTRIES WITHIN THE REGION, WHILE AIMING TO COMMISSION THE REMAINING UNIT AT THE KAFUE GORGE LOWER HYDRO-POWER STATION BY THE END OF THE YEAR.

FURTHERMORE, TO FACILITATE THE EXPORT OF ELECTRICITY TO THE EAST AFRICAN REGION THROUGH THE EASTERN AFRICA POWER POOL, GOVERNMENT WILL COMPLETE THE REMAINING CIRCUITS FOR THE ZAMBIA-TANZANIA-KENYA INTERCONNECTOR, AND REALISE OUR COMMITMENT TO MAKE ZAMBIA AN ELECTRICITY HUB IN THE REGION.

MADAM SPEAKER,

GOVERNMENT SHALL ENSURE THAT MAJOR ELECTRICITY GENERATION PROJECTS, SUCH AS THE BATOKA GORGE HYDRO POWER PROJECT, WHICH HAS THE POTENTIAL TO GENERATE 2,400 MEGAWATTS ARE IMPLEMENTED TO SUPPORT THE RAPID EXPANSION OF OUR ECONOMY AND KEEP UP WITH POPULATION GROWTH DEMANDS.

IN KEEPING WITH OUR COMMITMENT TO GROW AND DIVERSIFY OUR ELECTRICITY SUPPLY BASE, WE SHALL ENSURE THAT ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF CLEAN ENERGY, SUCH AS WIND, GEOTHERMAL AND SOLAR, ARE FULLY EXPLOITED.

MADAM SPEAKER,

GOVERNMENT IS RESTRUCTURING THE PETROLEUM SUB-SECTOR TO BRING EFFICIENCY IN THE PETROLEUM SUPPLY CHAIN, INCLUDING THE RESTRUCTURING OF INDENI OIL REFINERY, WHICH IS NO LONGER ECONOMICAL AND CANNOT COMPETE WITH MODERN REFINERIES.

INSTEAD OF PROCESSING CRUDE OIL, THE COMPANY SHALL BE BLENDING LOCALLY PRODUCED BIODIESEL AND ETHANOL WITH IMPORTED FINISHED PETROLEUM PRODUCTS, ULTIMATELY PROVIDING A READY MARKET FOR LOCALLY PRODUCED BIODIESEL AND ETHANOL, AS WELL AS CONTRIBUTE TO REDUCTION OF THE COST OF PETROLEUM PRODUCTS.

IT IS ALSO ENVISAGED THAT INDENI SHALL ALSO MANAGE FUEL DEPOTS AND MARK PETROLEUM PRODUCTS TO GUARANTEE PRODUCT INTEGRITY AND PREVENT TAX FRAUD, WHILE THE TAZAMA PIPELINE WILL BE USED TO TRANSPORT FINISHED PETROLEUM PRODUCTS.

IN ORDER TO PROMOTE EFFICIENCY AND STABILITY IN THE PETROLEUM SUB-SECTOR, AS WELL AS ENABLE GOVERNMENT PLAY ITS RIGHTFUL ROLE OF A REGULATOR, A FUNDAMENTAL POLICY SHIFT SHALL PROVIDE FOR THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO DRIVE THE BULK PROCUREMENT SYSTEM FOR PETROLEUM PRODUCTS.

MADAM SPEAKER,

WITH THE CURRENT DIGITAL REVOLUTION OFFERING LIMITLESS OPPORTUNITIES TO ACCELERATE THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF OUR COUNTRY, THERE IS AN URGENT NEED FOR US TO INVEST IN THE DIGITALISATION OF OUR ECONOMY BY INVESTING IN INTERNET CONNECTIVITY WHICH STANDS AT **68** PERCENT, DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE CURRENTLY AT **45** PERCENT, DIGITAL SKILLS PRESENTLY AT **40** PERCENT AND DIGITAL INNOVATION AT **35** PERCENT.

IN THIS REGARD, A DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION STRATEGY HAS BEEN DEVELOPED. FURTHER, TO SUPPORT DIGITAL SKILLS AS WELL AS DIGITAL INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP, GOVERNMENT IS PARTNERING WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO ESTABLISH INNOVATION HUBS.

ADDITIONALLY, INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IS ALSO BEING PROMOTED THROUGH INITIATIVES, SUCH AS THE NATIONAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FOR YOUTH EMPLOYABILITY AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

MADAM SPEAKER,

AS AN ADMINISTRATION, WE ARE OF THE UNWAVERING BELIEF THAT EDUCATION IS THE BEST POSSIBLE PLATFORM OF SOCIO – ECONOMIC PROGRESS ANY GOVERNMENT CAN AND SHOULD MAKE AVAILABLE TO ITS CITIZENS.

FOR THIS REASON, OUR GOVERNMENT HAS DONE AWAY WITH LONGSTANDING ENCUMBRANCES SUCH AS TUITION AND EXAMINATION FEES, AND IS PROVIDING **FREE EDUCATION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS** FROM EARLY CHILDHOOD TO SECONDARY SCHOOL, SO THAT MORE OF OUR CHILDREN, WHO WERE UNABLE TO ATTEND SCHOOL, CAN BE GIVEN AN OPPORTUNITY TO DO SO.

TO FILL UP THE GAP IN FINANCES CREATED BY THE FREE EDUCATION POLICY, WE HAVE INCREASED GRANTS TO SCHOOLS, AS WELL AS

ENSURING TIMELY DELIVERY OF THE SAME, TO CATER FOR THEIR OPERATIONS.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO PROP UP THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION, GOVERNMENT HAS RECRUITED AND DEPLOYED OVER **30,000** TEACHERS TO VARIOUS SCHOOLS ACROSS THE COUNTRY, AND WE ARE CONFIDENT THIS SHALL SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVE THE TEACHER-PUPIL RATIOS, AS WELL AS EDUCATION OUTCOMES.

GOVERNMENT HAS CONTINUED TO PAY BOARDING FEES AND PROVIDE EDUCATION GRANTS FOR THE DISADVANTAGED ADOLESCENT GIRLS TO ENCOURAGE THE GIRL CHILD TO REMAIN IN SCHOOL, AS WELL AS CONTINUING TO IMPLEMENT THE KEEPING GIRLS IN SCHOOL PROJECT, WITH APPROXIMATELY **59,000** GIRLS CURRENTLY BENEFITTING FROM THE PROJECT.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO CREATE ADDITIONAL LEARNING SPACE, GOVERNMENT SHALL CONSTRUCT **120** SECONDARY SCHOOLS, IN ADDITION TO THE **115** SECONDARY SCHOOLS, WHOSE CONSTRUCTION STARTED IN PREVIOUS YEARS AND ARE AT VARIOUS STAGES OF COMPLETION.

FURTHER, **TO ENSURE THAT NO SCHOOL GOING CHILD SITS ON THE FLOOR BY THE END OF 2023**, GOVERNMENT HAS EMBARKED ON AN AMBITIOUS EXERCISE TO LEVERAGE THE CONSTITUENCY DEVELOPMENT FUND (CDF) TO LOCALLY SOURCE DESKS FOR SCHOOLS, SO THAT LOCAL PEOPLE CAN TAKE FULL OWNERSHIP FOR THIS IMMENSELY IMPORTANT EXERCISE.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO MITIGATE THE CHALLENGE OF HIGH YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT, GOVERNMENT IS IMPLEMENTING VARIOUS YOUTH SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES, **THIS YEAR ALONE**, OVER **12,000** YOUTHS HAVING BEEN TRAINED IN VARIOUS SKILLS, SUCH AS METAL FABRICATION, CARPENTRY AND JOINERY, MINING, BRICKLAYING AND GENERAL AGRICULTURE.

WE ARE GRATEFUL TO THE CHURCH AND THE CIVIL SOCIETY MOVEMENT FOR THE ADDITIONAL SUPPORT BEING PROVIDED.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO UNDERSCORE OUR COMMITMENT TO PROVIDING AFFORDABLE QUALITY HEALTH SERVICES AT ALL LEVELS, GOVERNMENT HAS RECRUITED AND DEPLOYED OVER **11,000** HEALTH WORKERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY, DRAMATICALLY IMPROVING THE HEALTH WORKERS TO PATIENT RATIOS

IN PUBLIC HEALTH INSTITUTIONS AND THEREBY EXPANDING ACCESS TO IMPROVED BASIC AND SPECIALIST HEALTHCARE FOR OUR CITIZENS.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO TAKE HEALTH SERVICES AS CLOSE TO OUR PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE, GOVERNMENT HAS CONTINUED WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF **36** DISTRICT HOSPITALS COUNTRYWIDE, WHICH ARE AT VARIOUS LEVELS OF COMPLETION, WHILE WORKING ON COMPLETING THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE REMAINING **16** OUT OF A TARGET OF **115** MINI HOSPITALS, AS WELL AS **83** OUT OF A TARGET OF **650** HEALTH POSTS.

LOOKING AHEAD, GOVERNMENT SHALL CONSTRUCT ADDITIONAL HEALTH FACILITIES, AS WELL AS UPGRADING AND MODERNISING EXISTING ONES, INCLUDING CONSTRUCTION OF MATERNITY WINGS AT ALL HEALTH CENTRES.

MADAM SPEAKER,

GOING FORWARD, GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO UNDERTAKE RECRUITMENT IN THE SOCIAL SECTOR TO CONTINUE IMPROVING SERVICE DELIVERY TO OUR PEOPLE.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO ENSURE STEADY SUPPLY AND AVAILABILITY OF ESSENTIAL DRUGS AND MEDICINES, GOVERNMENT HAS PROCURED A YEAR'S SUPPLY OF ESSENTIAL MEDICINES AND MEDICAL SUPPLIES, WHILE PROMOTING LOCAL MANUFACTURING OF PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS AND OTHER MEDICAL SUPPLIES.

THIS IS TO IMPROVE THE RESILIENCE AND EFFICIENCY OF OUR PHARMACEUTICAL SUPPLY CHAIN.

OUR ADMINISTRATION SHALL CONTINUE TO SUSTAINABLY MOBILISE AND MAKE AVAILABLE HEALTHCARE FINANCING OPTIONS TO ENSURE OUR PEOPLE HAVE ACCESS TO QUALITY AND AFFORDABLE HEALTHCARE AT ALL LEVELS.

MADAM SPEAKER,

THE NEW DAWN ADMINISTRATION REMAINS COMMITTED TO THE FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19, WITH SAVING LIVES AND PROTECTING LIVELIHOODS BEING OUR FOREMOST PRIORITY.

WE ARE HAPPY TO NOTE THAT THE COVID-19 VACCINATION CAMPAIGN THAT WAS RE-LAUNCHED ON 8TH OCTOBER, 2021, COUPLED WITH OTHER INTERVENTIONS, HAS ENCOURAGED CITIZENS TO GET VACCINATED, WITH OUR NATIONAL COVID-19 VACCINATION STATUS HAVING IMPROVED FROM LESS THAN **10** PERCENT LAST YEAR TO **46.5** PERCENT THIS YEAR.

THIS HAS BEEN KEY IN KEEPING OUR ECONOMY MOVING, PROTECTING JOBS AND INCOMES, AND PRESERVING LIVES AND LIVELIHOODS.

WE HAVE SINCE ATTAINED A VACCINATION COVERAGE OF ABOVE **70 PERCENT** IN **22** DISTRICTS, WHILE GOVERNMENT HAS SINCE LIFTED THE MANDATORY REQUIREMENT OF WEARING MASKS IN THESE DISTRICTS.

WE COMMEND OUR CITIZENS FOR SUPPORTING THE VACCINATION EXERCISE, AND IMPLORE ALL THOSE YET TO BE VACCINATED TO QUICKLY DO SO, AS COVID-19 IS STILL UPON US, AND LET US ALL CONTINUE OBSERVING THE COVID-19 HEALTH GUIDELINES AS PRESCRIBED.

MADAM SPEAKER,

OUR GOVERNMENT SHALL CONTINUE TO PRIORITISE FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY THROUGH DIVERSIFIED FOOD PRODUCTION INITIATIVES, AND ENSURING THE ATTAINMENT OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL ON ENSURING ZERO HUNGER.

WE ARE PLEASED TO REPORT THAT THE COUNTRY IS FOOD SECURE, WITH OVER **1.2 MILLION** TONNES OF SURPLUS MAIZE.

TO GUARANTEE AND ENHANCE NATIONAL FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY, GOVERNMENT IS IMPLEMENTING THE FARMER INPUT SUPPORT PROGRAMME, SUPPORTING OVER **1 MILLION** SMALL AND MEDIUM SCALE FARMERS WITH FERTILIZERS AND SEED TO PRODUCE MORE FOOD FOR OUR PEOPLE.

IN ADDITION, GOVERNMENT IS IMPLEMENTING THE FOOD SECURITY PACK PROGRAMME TO ENSURE FOOD SECURITY AT HOUSEHOLD LEVEL FOR VULNERABLE BUT VIABLE FARMERS, BY PROVIDING BASIC FARMING INPUTS, SUCH AS FERTILIZER AS WELL AS CEREAL AND LEGUME SEEDS TO VULNERABLE HOUSEHOLDS, PARTICULARLY FEMALE-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS.

THIS PROGRAMME IS BENEFITTING **263,700** RECIPIENT HOUSEHOLDS, WITH **40,000** HOUSEHOLDS BEING SUPPORTED WITH INPUTS FOR WETLAND FARMING, WHILE ANOTHER **1,000** HOUSEHOLDS ARE BEING SUPPORTED WITH LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY PRODUCTION.

MADAM SPEAKER,

GOVERNMENT REMAINS COMMITTED TO IMPLEMENTING VARIOUS INTERVENTIONS AIMED AT IMPROVING ACCESS TO CLEAN AND SAFE WATER AND ADEQUATE SANITATION AS WELL AS ENSURING NATIONAL WATER SECURITY.

THE KAFUE BULK WATER SUPPLY PROJECT, KAPUTA WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION PROJECT, AND MUFUMBWE WATER SUPPLY PROJECT HAVE SINCE BEEN COMPLETED AND COMMISSIONED, BENEFITING OVER **485,000** PEOPLE; WHILE THE CHINSALI WATER SUPPLY PROJECT HAS ALSO BEEN COMPLETED AND ONCE COMMISSIONED, WILL BENEFIT OVER **15,000** PEOPLE.

GOVERNMENT IS ALSO WORKING TOWARDS COMPLETING THE KAFULAFUTA WATER SUPPLY PROJECT, THE NKANA WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION PROJECT AS WELL AS THE CHIPATA WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION PROJECT.

THE ONGOING PROJECTS STILL TO BE COMPLETED ARE THE INTEGRATED SMALL TOWNS WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION PROJECT IN NAKONDE AND MPIKA DISTRICTS, TRANSFORMING RURAL LIVELIHOODS IN WESTERN ZAMBIA PROJECT AND ZAMBIA WATER AND SANITATION PROJECT ON THE COPPERBELT, AS WELL AS THE LUSAKA EMERGENCY WATER SUPPLY AND LUSAKA SANITATION PROGRAMME.

ONCE COMPLETED, THE PROJECTS WILL PROVIDE SAFE AND CLEAN WATER TO OVER **1.5 MILLION** PEOPLE.

MADAM SPEAKER,

A TOTAL OF **94** PIPED WATER SCHEMES WERE CONSTRUCTED IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE YEAR, **438** ADDITIONAL BOREHOLES WERE CONSTRUCTED, **871** NON-FUNCTIONAL BOREHOLES WERE REHABILITATED COUNTRYWIDE, AND A FURTHER **279** SANITATION FACILITIES WERE CONSTRUCTED.

IN ORDER TO SUSTAIN THE CONTINUED IMPLEMENTATION OF WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION PROJECTS TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH AND WELL-

BEING OF OUR PEOPLE, WE SHALL WORK AT ENSURING THE COMMERCIAL VIABILITY OF ALL OUR WATER UTILITY COMPANIES.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO REVERSE THE DEVASTATING EFFECTS OF POVERTY AND INEQUALITY AMONG OUR PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY IN RURAL AREAS, GOVERNMENT HAS ENHANCED THE PROVISION OF SOCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAMMES, SUCH AS THE SOCIAL CASH TRANSFER, TO EASE THE BURDEN FOR THE POOR AND VULNERABLE.

UNDER THE SOCIAL CASH TRANSFER PROGRAMME, OUR ADMINISTRATION HAS INCREASED THE NUMBER OF BENEFICIARY HOUSEHOLDS ACROSS THE COUNTRY, WITH THE NUMBER OF BENEFICIARY HOUSEHOLDS BEING SUPPORTED UP FROM **887,759** IN 2021 TO **913,254** THIS YEAR, WHILE TARGETING TO ECLIPSE **1 MILLION** BENEFICIARY HOUSEHOLDS BY THE END OF THE YEAR.

GOVERNMENT HAS ALSO INCREASED THE TRANSFER VALUE FOR ALL SOCIAL CASH TRANSFER BENEFICIARIES FROM **K300** TO **K400** EVERY TWO MONTHS, WITH THE TRANSFER VALUE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES UP FROM **K600** TO **K800** EVERY TWO MONTHS.

OUR GOVERNMENT HAS WORKED EXCEEDINGLY HARD TO ENSURE THAT WE ARE UP-TO-DATE IN PAYING **ALL** THE BENEFICIARY HOUSEHOLDS UNDER THIS PROGRAMME.

MADAM SPEAKER,

GOVERNMENT IS IMPLEMENTING THE 'CASH PLUS' APPROACH TO LINK SOCIAL CASH TRANSFER BENEFICIARY HOUSEHOLDS TO OTHER SOCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAMMES, SUCH AS THE FOOD SECURITY PACK AND THE GIRLS EDUCATION AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND LIVELIHOODS.

WE ARE ALSO MAINSTREAMING NUTRITION IN THESE SOCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAMMES TO IMPROVE NUTRITION AMONG POOR AND VULNERABLE HOUSEHOLDS.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY, GOVERNMENT IS IMPLEMENTING VARIOUS WOMEN EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMMES, WITH **9,614** WOMEN SO FAR HAVING RECEIVED PRODUCTIVITY GRANTS FOR VARIOUS ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES UNDER THE SUPPORTING WOMEN'S LIVELIHOODS INTERVENTION.

IN ADDITION, UNDER THE VILLAGE BANKING PROGRAMME, **4,301** WOMEN ACCESSED MICRO CREDIT SUPPORT AND FINANCIAL LITERACY, AS WELL AS LIFE AND BUSINESS SKILLS TO ENABLE THEM ENGAGE IN VARIOUS BUSINESSES.

MADAM SPEAKER,

WE ARE CONCERNED WITH THE INCREASING NUMBER OF CHILDREN LIVING ON THE STREETS, AND AS SUCH, GOVERNMENT IS REMOVING, REHABILITATING AND REINTEGRATING STREET CHILDREN INTO SOCIETY TO TRANSFORM THEM INTO PRODUCTIVE CITIZENS.

TO FURTHER ENHANCE THE WELLBEING OF CHILDREN IN OUR COUNTRY, THE CHILDREN'S CODE ACT NO. 12 OF 2022, HAS BEEN ENACTED TO COMPREHENSIVELY PROMOTE AND PROTECT THE RIGHTS AND WELFARE OF OUR CHILDREN.

MADAM SPEAKER,

GOVERNMENT IS REVISING THE NATIONAL POLICY ON DISABILITY TO ENHANCE THE WELFARE OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND PROMOTE THEIR EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

MADAM SPEAKER,

OUR COUNTRY'S SOCIO-ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION AGENDA IS ANCHORED ON THE PRINCIPLES OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, AND WE ARE RESOLUTE TO DEVELOP WITHOUT COMPROMISING THE ABILITY OF FUTURE GENERATIONS TO MEET THEIR OWN NEEDS.

TO THIS END, WE ARE IMPLEMENTING PROGRAMMES AIMED AT STRENGTHENING CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AND MITIGATION, AND PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO REVERSE FOREST AND LAND DEGRADATION, GOVERNMENT IS IMPLEMENTING THE TRANSFORMING LANDSCAPES FOR RESILIENCE AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECT ACROSS LUAPULA, MUCHINGA AND NORTHERN PROVINCES TO PROMOTE THE SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF OUR NATURAL RESOURCES WHILE IMPROVING THE LIVELIHOODS AND RESILIENCE OF RURAL COMMUNITIES.

THE PROJECT TARGETS TO BENEFIT **562,800** PEOPLE, WITH AT LEAST **50 PERCENT** OF THE BENEFICIARIES BEING FEMALE HEADED HOUSEHOLDS.

BY IMPLEMENTING THE ECOSYSTEM-BASED ADAPTATION PROGRAMME, **11,600** HECTARES OF WETLANDS AND FOREST AS WELL AS **3,250** HECTARES OF AGRICULTURE LAND WILL BE REHABILITATED BY 2025 ACROSS THE DAMAGED ECOSYSTEMS ON THE LUKANGA AND BANGWEULU WETLANDS IN CENTRAL AND LUAPULA PROVINCES, RESPECTIVELY.

THESE RESTORATIVE MEASURES WILL RESULT IN **50,700** PEOPLE BENEFITTING THROUGH VARIOUS ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES SUCH AS AGRICULTURE, FISHING AND FOREST-BASED INDUSTRIES.

MADAM SPEAKER,

WE ARE PROMOTING AFFORESTATION, REFORESTATION AND REGENERATION OF INDIGENOUS FORESTS BY PROMOTING AND SUPPORTING THE USE OF INTEGRATED AND COMMUNITY-BASED SUSTAINABLE NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

THESE INITIATIVES ARE HELPING COMMUNITIES TO ADOPT CLIMATE-RESILIENT AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES, THEREBY REDUCING THEIR VULNERABILITY TO CLIMATE CHANGE.

MADAM SPEAKER,

WE REMAIN DETERMINED TO REVERSE THE TREND OF DEFORESTATION BY DISCOURAGING THE USE OF CHARCOAL AND WOOD FUEL, BY PROMOTING FOREST-BASED ACTIVITIES, SUCH AS BEE KEEPING, MUSHROOM HARVESTING AND TREE CROP PLANTING, AS ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF INCOME AND LIVELIHOODS FOR OUR PEOPLE.

GOVERNMENT IS PARTICULARLY LOOKING TO LEVERAGE THE OUTSTANDING ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF CARBON TRADING TO ENHANCE THE PRESERVATION OF FORESTS AND EXISTING ECOSYSTEMS.

WE ARE PLEASED TO NOTE THAT SOME OF OUR PEOPLE ARE ADOPTING GREEN AND RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES, SUCH AS BIOGAS, SOLAR AND WIND.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO ADDRESS THE CHALLENGE AROUND THE INDISCRIMINATE EXPLOITATION OF OUR FORESTS, PARTICULARLY CUTTING DOWN OF TREES, GOVERNMENT IS STRENGTHENING REGULATIONS AND ENFORCEMENT OF THE LAW, AND WE URGE ALL OUR PEOPLE TO COMPLY WITH THE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS ON THE USE OF OUR FOREST RESOURCES.

WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND INTERNATIONAL FINANCING INSTITUTIONS, GOVERNMENT WILL STRENGTHEN THE POLICY FRAMEWORK ON CLIMATE CHANGE TO ENHANCE THE COUNTRY'S EFFORTS TOWARDS CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTION, MITIGATION AND RESILIENCE BUILDING FOR THE ATTAINMENT OF A SUSTAINABLE, INCLUSIVE, CLIMATE-RESILIENT AND GREEN ECONOMY.

MADAM SPEAKER,

GOVERNMENT IS CONCERNED WITH THE UNABATED LEVELS OF POLLUTION AND THE INDISCRIMINATE DISPOSAL OF WASTE IN THE COUNTRY.

WE ARE STRENGTHENING ENFORCEMENT OF REGULATIONS TO ADDRESS THIS PROBLEM, WHILE RAMPING UP EFFORTS TO ENSURE THAT WASTE IS REUSED, REDUCED AND RECYCLED TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT.

WE URGE OUR LOCAL AUTHORITIES TO BE MORE PROACTIVE IN THE PROVISION OF WASTE MANAGEMENT SERVICES TO OUR COMMUNITIES, WHILE CITIZENS ARE ENCOURAGED TO BE FULLY OBLIGATED FOR THE SAFE AND RESPONSIBLE DISPOSAL OF WASTE.

GOOD GOVERNANCE ENVIRONMENT

MADAM SPEAKER,

WE CANNOT OVER-EMPHASIZE THE ROLE OF GOOD GOVERNANCE IN CREATING A CONDUCTIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION.

WE ARE, THEREFORE, IMPLEMENTING MEASURES TO STRENGTHEN THE POLICY AND GOVERNANCE ENVIRONMENT, RULE OF LAW, HUMAN RIGHTS AND CONSTITUTIONALISM, AS WELL AS INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND FOREIGN RELATIONS.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO IMPROVE THE GOVERNANCE ENVIRONMENT, GOVERNMENT IS RESOLVED TO IMPLEMENTING DECENTRALISATION BY DEVOLVING PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES, AS WELL AS EMPOWERING OUR COMMUNITIES TO DECIDE ON THEIR LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES AND PARTICIPATE IN LOCAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES.

TO THIS EFFECT, THE NEW DAWN ADMINISTRATION HAS SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASED THE ALLOCATION TO THE CONSTITUENCY DEVELOPMENT FUND FROM **1.6 MILLION** TO **25.7 MILLION** KWACHA PER CONSTITUENCY **PER YEAR**, AND WE HAVE EXPANDED THE SCOPE OF THE FUND TO INCLUDE COMPONENTS ON EMPOWERMENT FOR YOUTH AND WOMEN AS WELL AS BURSARIES FOR SECONDARY BOARDING SCHOOL AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT.

MADAM SPEAKER,

WE ARE ALIVE TO THE CHALLENGES THAT HAVE LED TO THE LOW UPTAKE OF THE RESOURCES UNDER THE FUND, AS WELL AS THE RESTRICTIONS POSED BY THE EXISTING LEGAL FRAMEWORK TO ALLOW PARTICIPATION OF COMMUNITY LEADERS OTHER THAN THE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT AND COUNCILLORS.

TO ADDRESS THESE CHALLENGES, WE SHALL STREAMLINE THE OPERATIONS OF THE CONSTITUENCY DEVELOPMENT FUND AT ALL LEVELS AND REVIEW RELEVANT LEGISLATION TO ALLOW FOR EXPANDED STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION AND INCLUSIVITY.

FURTHERMORE, GOVERNMENT HAS EMBARKED ON A REVIEW OF THE NATIONAL DECENTRALISATION POLICY OF 2013 IN ORDER TO ADDRESS THE IMPEDIMENTS TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECENTRALISATION REFORMS, AND ENSURE ALIGNMENT OF THE POLICY WITH THE CONSTITUTION AS WELL AS ADDRESS EMERGING ISSUES.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO ENHANCE THE INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY OF RURAL LOCAL AUTHORITIES TO EFFECTIVELY DELIVER DEVOLVED PUBLIC SERVICES, GOVERNMENT HAS SECURED **US\$210 MILLION** FROM THE WORLD BANK UNDER THE ZAMBIA DEVOLUTION PROGRAMME TO STRENGTHEN FINANCING, INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN **96** RURAL TOWN COUNCILS IN ZAMBIA.

THE NEW DAWN ADMINISTRATION HAS AND SHALL CONTINUE TO RESPECT THE AUTONOMY OF OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNANCE INSTITUTIONS, SUCH AS THE OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL, OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC PROTECTOR, ANTI-CORRUPTION COMMISSION AND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO PROVIDE FOR BETTER MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC DEBT CONTRACTION AS WELL AS OPERATIONALISE THE PROVISIONS OF THE CONSTITUTION, GOVERNMENT IS UNDERTAKING PUBLIC FINANCE MANAGEMENT REFORMS AS PART OF STRENGTHENING TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY.

THIS IS EVIDENCED BY ENACTMENT OF THE PUBLIC DEBT MANAGEMENT ACT NO. 7 OF 2022.

THIS AMENDMENT ACT EMPOWERS YOU THE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT, **WHO ARE THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ZAMBIAN PEOPLE**, TO PROVIDE OVERSIGHT ON DEBT CONTRACTION SO THAT **NEVER AGAIN** SHOULD OUR COUNTRY GO BACK INTO A DEBT TRAP.

MADAM SPEAKER,

THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION IS A CORE COMPONENT OF OUR STRATEGY, NOT ONLY TO ENHANCE TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF PUBLIC RESOURCES, BUT ALSO A MATTER OF JUSTICE IN THE WAY WE DELIVER SOCIO-ECONOMIC DIVIDENDS TO OUR PEOPLE.

WE HAVE ESTABLISHED THE ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL CRIMES COURT TO SPEED UP, BUT FAIRLY DISPOSE OF ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL CRIME CASES.

TO STRENGTHEN THE POLICY FRAMEWORK ON THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION, THE NATIONAL ANTI-CORRUPTION POLICY IS UNDERGOING REVIEW, WITH THE PRINCIPLE AIM OF STRENGTHENING STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION.

IN ORDER TO RE-ESTABLISH THE TENETS OF INTEGRITY AND TOTAL ACCOUNTABILITY IN PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY, THE CRUSADE AGAINST CORRUPTION SHALL REMAIN DECISIVE AND WILL BE CROSSCUTTING WITH NO SACRED COWS.

MAY WE REITERATE, THAT THE LAW SHALL BE APPLIED FULLY, STERNLY BUT FAIRLY AGAINST ALL THOSE WHO SHALL BE FOUND WANTING OF PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE CRIMES.

MADAM SPEAKER,

OUR ADMINISTRATION CONTINUES TO ADDRESS THE GAPS IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS, WITH GOVERNMENT COMMITTED TO REVIEWING RELEVANT ELECTORAL LAWS AND REGULATIONS, IN LINE WITH INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICE.

FURTHER, WE HAVE COMMENCED IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONTINUOUS REGISTRATION OF VOTERS, IN LINE WITH THE ELECTORAL PROCESS ACT NO. 35 OF 2016, AND TO HEED TO WIDE-RANGING STAKEHOLDERS' CONSENSUS ON THE MATTER.

MADAM SPEAKER,

WE ARE PACING UP ON THE USE OF DIGITAL PLATFORMS TO ENHANCE THE DELIVERY OF PUBLIC SERVICES, AND BY MID THIS YEAR, **147** SERVICES PROVIDED BY GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES, DEPARTMENTS AND STATUTORY BODIES HAD BEEN INTEGRATED ON THE GOVERNMENT SERVICE BUS, WITH COMMERCIAL BANKS AND MOBILE NETWORK OPERATORS INCORPORATED ON THE GOVERNMENT SERVICE BUS PAYMENT GATEWAY TO INCREASE THE PAYMENT OPTIONS FOR PUBLIC SERVICES.

AS A RESULT, REVENUE COLLECTION HAS BEEN ENHANCED AND LEAKAGES REDUCED.

MADAM SPEAKER,

THE EMPOWERMENT OF OUR PEOPLE WITH LAND OWNERSHIP, PARTICULARLY WOMEN, REMAINS HIGH ON OUR AGENDA.

IN 2021, WE ALLOCATED **28.4 PERCENT** OF AVAILABLE LAND TO WOMEN, AND GOVERNMENT IS GOING AHEAD TO IMPLEMENT THE POLICY OF ALLOCATING **50 PERCENT** OF AVAILABLE LAND TO WOMEN.

WE ARE DEEPLY CONCERNED, HOWEVER, WITH THE UNSCRUPULOUS MANNER IN WHICH SOME OF OUR LOCAL AUTHORITIES ARE EXECUTING THE DELEGATED FUNCTION OF ALLOCATING LAND TO OUR CITIZENS.

IT IS REGRETTABLE AND EXTREMELY UNFORTUNATE, THAT SOME OF OUR CITIZENS HAVE HAD TO SUFFER DEMOLITIONS OF THEIR PROPERTIES FOR WANT OF PROCEDURE, AND IN SOME INSTANCES, A GLARING DISREGARD FOR THE LAW.

THOSE PARTICIPATING IN THE ILLEGAL ALLOCATION AND ACQUISITION OF LAND WILL BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE TO THE FULLEST EXTENT OF THE LAW.

MADAM SPEAKER,

GOVERNMENT SHALL UNDERTAKE LAND REFORMS TO OPERATIONALISE THE NATIONAL LAND POLICY, AND CARRY OUT A REVIEW OF VARIOUS STATUTES RELATING TO LAND MANAGEMENT TO ENSURE ENHANCED EQUITABLE ACCESS TO LAND FOR INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY AMONG THE CITIZENRY.

WE SHALL ALSO DECENTRALISE LAND REGISTRATION TO PROVINCIAL CENTRES AND DIGITISE THE ISSUANCE OF CERTIFICATES OF LAND TITLE TO ENSURE EFFICIENCY AND TRANSPARENCY IN LAND ADMINISTRATION.

MADAM SPEAKER,

OUR ADMINISTRATION VEHEMENTLY BELIEVES IN THE RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, CIVIL LIBERTIES AND FREEDOMS AS GIVEN AND GUARANTEED FOR ALL BY OUR REPUBLICAN CONSTITUTION.

WE SHALL CONTINUE TO RESPECT AND PROMOTE OUR PEOPLE'S HUMAN RIGHTS WITHIN THE CONFINES OF THE LAW.

MADAM SPEAKER,

OVER THE YEARS, THE PUBLIC ORDER ACT, CHAPTER 113 OF THE LAWS OF ZAMBIA, HAS BEEN A SUBJECT OF CONTENTIOUS PUBLIC DEBATE AND COURT ACTION, WITH SOME SECTIONS OF SOCIETY CALLING FOR ITS OUTRIGHT REPEAL.

AS A DEMONSTRATION OF OUR COMMITMENT AND DESIRE FOR CITIZENS TO EXERCISE AND ENJOY THEIR CIVIL LIBERTIES AND FREEDOMS, INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO FREELY ASSEMBLE AND ASSOCIATE AS PROVIDED FOR UNDER THE BILL OF RIGHTS IN OUR CONSTITUTION, CABINET HAS APPROVED, IN PRINCIPLE, TO REPEAL AND REPLACE THE PUBLIC ORDER ACT.

THIS PROCESS IS TRANSPARENT AND COMPREHENSIVE, AND INVOLVES ALL STAKEHOLDERS FOR BETTER CONSENSUS BUILDING.

ALL STAKEHOLDERS, PARTICULARLY POLITICAL PARTIES, ARE ENCOURAGED TO FULLY PARTICIPATE IN THIS IMPORTANT PROCESS.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO ENSURE THAT THE COUNTRY HAS HARMONISED PENAL PROVISIONS, GOVERNMENT HAS COMMENCED THE PROCESS TO REPEAL AND REPLACE THE PENAL CODE, CHAPTER 87 OF THE LAWS OF ZAMBIA AND THE CRIMINAL PROCEDURE CODE, CHAPTER 88 OF THE LAWS OF ZAMBIA.

THE REVIEW ALSO SEEKS TO AMEND PROVISIONS RELATING TO THE DEATH PENALTY AND CRIMINAL DEFAMATION OF THE PRESIDENT, AMONG OTHERS.

IN THE INTERIM, THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE HAS SINCE CONCLUDED THE DRAFTING OF LEGISLATION TO REPEAL THE PROVISIONS RELATING TO THE IMPOSITION OF THE DEATH PENALTY AND THE LAW RELATING TO CRIMINAL DEFAMATION OF THE PRESIDENT.

THE SAID LEGISLATION IS SCHEDULED TO BE TABLED BEFORE THIS HOUSE DURING THE COMING SESSION, SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY CABINET.

SUFFICE TO INDICATE, THAT THESE PIECES OF LEGISLATION HAVE ARCHAIC PROVISIONS THAT DO NOT CONFORM TO THE INTERNATIONAL BILL OF RIGHTS WHICH ZAMBIA IS A SIGNATORY, WHILE LOCALLY, THESE LAWS HAVE PENALTIES, WHICH IN SOME CASES ARE INCONSISTENT WITH OTHER PIECES OF LEGISLATION FOR SIMILAR OFFENCES.

MADAM SPEAKER,

TO IMPROVE EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS IN THE REPRESENTATION OF GOVERNMENT IN CIVIL PROCEEDINGS, AS WELL AS ENHANCE CLEARANCE OF CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS TO WHICH GOVERNMENT IS PARTY TO, THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S CHAMBERS WILL BE DECENTRALISED TO ALL PROVINCES, IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 177 (6) OF THE CONSTITUTION OF ZAMBIA.

TO ENHANCE ACCESS TO LEGAL SERVICES, ESPECIALLY AMONG THE POOR AND DISADVANTAGED, THE LEGAL AID BOARD HAS ESTABLISHED OFFICES IN FIVE ADDITIONAL DISTRICTS, NAMELY MWINILUNGA, NAKONDE, MBALA, MAZABUKA AND PETAUKE.

MADAM SPEAKER,

ZAMBIA SHALL CONTINUE TO ASSUME THE ROLE OF PEACE-MAKER WHENEVER AND WHERESOEVER THIS REQUIREMENT BECOMES NECESSARY, BECAUSE INSTABILITY ANYWHERE AMOUNTS TO INSTABILITY EVERYWHERE.

IN THIS REGARD, WE ARE COMMITTED TO PROMOTING THE RETURN OF PEACE IN THE CABO DELGADO REGION OF MOZAMBIQUE, AS WELL AS IN SEVERAL OTHER PARTS OF THE REGION AND CONTINENT THREATENED BY CONFLICT.

WE ARE HONOURED FOR BEING ELECTED AS IN-COMING CHAIRPERSON OF THE ORGAN ON POLITICS, DEFENCE AND SECURITY COOPERATION OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY, AND WE PLEDGE TO DISCHARGE THIS RESPONSIBILITY TO THE EXPECTATION OF MEMBER STATES.

CONCLUSION

MADAM SPEAKER,

JUST OVER A YEAR AGO, THE PEOPLE OF ZAMBIA, OVERWHELMINGLY GAVE US THE MANDATE TO PRESIDE OVER THE AFFAIRS OF THIS GREAT NATION.

WE PROMISED TO FIX THE ECONOMY AND WE ARE ON COURSE - WE ARE MANAGING THE DEBT SITUATION, MANAGING THE RESILIENCE OF OUR LOCAL CURRENCY, WE ARE CONTAINING INFLATION, AS WELL AS RESTORING MACRO-ECONOMIC STABILITY.

WE PROMISED FREE EDUCATION FOR OUR CHILDREN AND WE HAVE DELIVERED - NOW, EDUCATION IS NO LONGER A PRESERVE OF THOSE WITH MONEY - WE ARE DETERMINED TO KEEP IT THAT WAY.

WE PROMISED TO INCREASE CONSTITUENCY DEVELOPMENT FUND – WE HAVE INCREASED IT, THEREBY PUTTING OUR CITIZENS BACK AT THE HEART AND CENTRE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.

WE PROMISED TO FIGHT CORRUPTION - WE ARE FIGHTING CORRUPTION.

WE PROMISED TO BRING TO AN END THE BRUTALITY OF POLITICAL CADRES IN OUR MARKETS AND OTHER PUBLIC PLACES - LAW AND ORDER HAS BEEN RESTORED AND OUR PEOPLE ARE NOW FREE.

MADAM SPEAKER,

WE HAVE A DUTY TO UNITE THIS COUNTRY. A DUTY TO EMBRACE VALUES THAT PROMOTE PEACE AND UNITY, SALUTING THE GOOD IN OTHERS, IRRESPECTIVE OF THEIR CULTURE, TRADITIONS AND STATUS IN SOCIETY. A DUTY TO REMAIN UNITED UNDER OUR MOTTO OF **ONE ZAMBIA, ONE NATION – ONE PEOPLE.**

THIS IS OUR CHERISHED COMMITMENT. THIS IS OUR NOBLE MISSION. THIS IS OUR NARRATIVE. RISING ABOVE OUR CHALLENGES IN PURSUIT OF A BETTER ZAMBIA FOR ALL. A FREE, FAIR AND PRODUCTIVE NATION.

MADAM SPEAKER,

UNDER OUR LEADERSHIP, ONLY HARD WORK REMAINS THE SOURCE OF WEALTH AND LIVELIHOOD IN OUR COUNTRY - **NO SHORTCUTS. NO STEALING. NO CORRUPTION. NO TANTAMENI. NO KA SUMFING.**

MADAM SPEAKER,

IT IS NOW MY HONOUR AND PRIVILEGE TO DECLARE THE SECOND SESSION OF THE THIRTEENTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OFFICIALLY OPEN.

MAY GOD BLESS US ALL.

MAY GOD CONTINUE TO BLESS OUR EFFORTS.

MAY GOD BLESS OUR BELOVED COUNTRY, THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA.

MADAM SPEAKER,

I THANK YOU.