

Confidential



Republic of Zambia

Ministerial Statement To Parliament To Be Delivered By Hon. Harry Kalaba, MP, Minister Of Foreign Affairs On The 71st Session Of The United Nations General Assembly Held In New York, 19th To 26th September, 2016

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
LUSAKA**

October, 2016

Mr. Speaker,

I have the honour to report to this august House that Zambia was among the 193 United Nations Member States that participated in the 71st Session of the United Nations General Assembly held from 19th to 26th September, 2016 under the theme "**The Sustainable Development Goals: A Universal Push to Transform Our World**".

The Zambian delegation was led by the Republican President, His Excellency Mr. Edgar Chagwa Lungu who was accompanied by the First Lady Madam Esther Lungu and Permanent Secretaries from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Health, Commerce, Trade and Industry; as well as from Lands Natural Resources and Environmental Protection.

Mr. Speaker,

This year's General Assembly marked the first anniversary of the adoption of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As you may be aware, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the supportive means of implementation reflected in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA) calls for, among others, the Integration of SDGs into national development planning and fiscal frameworks of individual Member States. During the General Assembly, World Leaders, including His Excellency President Edgar Chagwa Lungu, re-affirmed their commitments to work towards translating the SDGs into actionable national policies, plans and programmes.

Mr. Speaker,

In his address to the General Assembly, President Lungu expressed appreciation for the important synergies of the United Nations Agenda 2030 and the African Union Agenda 2063 on continental development aspirations for "**the Africa We want**".

The President expressed the need for meaningful global development and the need to eliminate poverty, high unemployment, hunger and income inequality among the global citizens. He further stated that Zambia has undertaken specific measures aimed at promoting economic transformation in the country through the promotion of industrialisation in the agriculture and manufacturing sectors. As a solution to this, President Lungu urged the global meeting to increase investment in agro-processing industries to developing countries, including Zambia in order to enhance food production and add value to our products.

Mr. Speaker,

Climate change is a global phenomenon that has gripped nations on the planet. Its effects on agriculture, energy production and water supply has proved that it is not a hoax. Zambia, like many other countries, has not been spared by the effects of climate change. It is in this regard, that His Excellency the President spoke extensively on the subject and called for concerted efforts in ensuring the full operationalization of the Green Climate Fund aimed at providing the necessary finances to mitigate the scourge.

His Excellency the President also informed the world body of Zambia's efforts and progress made in addressing communicable diseases such as HIV/AIDs, TB and malaria. He further informed the meeting about the positive regional interventions that are contributing to the improved health system through strengthening of the SADC strategy on pooled procurement of essential medicines and health commodities. The Zambian Government has put in place policy measures to ensure that our people benefit from these interventions.

Mr. Speaker,

In addition to the General Debate, His Excellency the President participated in several other important meetings aimed at addressing topical global issues. Among these meetings was the High Level Summit to address large movements of refugees and migrants. This was the first time in the history of the General Assembly that Heads of State and Government convened to discuss the refugee and migrant crisis. This meeting presented a unique opportunity for creating a more responsible, predictable system for responding to large movements of refugees and migrants.

Mr. Speaker,

The High level Meeting adopted an outcome document that centred on five key principles: prevention, protection, self-reliance, partnerships and responsibility sharing in managing large movements of refugees and migrants. Furthermore, Sir, the outcome document outlined a set of commitments for both refugees and migrants.

This Summit was particularly important to Zambia due to the critical role the country continues to play in hosting refugees from the region and beyond.

Mr. Speaker,

On 20th September, 2016, Zambia was privileged to be among the 25 countries invited to participate in the Leaders' Summit on Refugees convened by the United States President, Mr. Barack Obama. These countries were selected from among countries that have made significant contributions to resolving the refugee crisis in the World. The Summit, among other issues, galvanized significant new global commitments including the call to increasing funding to International Organisations and humanitarian appeals, admission of more refugees through resettlement or other legal pathways, and for increased refugees

self-reliance and inclusion, particularly through access to education, legal employment and sustainable livelihoods.

Sir, in his address, President Lungu shared lessons on how Zambia has integrated refugees into the local communities and how the country has successfully facilitated the safe and dignified repatriation of more than two hundred thousand (200,000) Angolan and Rwandan refugees to their respective countries.

Mr. Speaker,

On the side-lines of the United Nations General Assembly, His Excellency the President participated in the US-Africa Business Forum hosted by President Barrack Obama, along with Ten (10) other African Heads of State and Government, a select group of American Chief Executives (CEOs) and African companies working together to develop concrete trade and business opportunities.

Mr. Speaker,

As earlier alluded to, Zambia, like others, has been negatively affected by climate change which has led to poor crop yields and energy deficit. I am happy to inform this august house that in recognition of the importance of addressing issues related to Climate Change, on 20th September, 2016, His Excellency the President signed the Paris Agreement on Climate Change within the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) dealing with greenhouse gas emissions mitigation, adaptation and finance scheduled to take effect in the year 2020.

By signing the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Government of the Republic of Zambia renewed its commitment and resolve to take action in order to attain sustainable prosperity and safeguard the health of our people and the planet.

Mr. Speaker,

As you may be aware, for the period 2016 to 2019, Zambia is a Member of the African Union Peace and Security Council which is the decision making body responsible for maintaining peace and security on the continent. On the margins of the 71st Session of the United Nations General Assembly, His Excellency the President was therefore among the African Leaders that attended the High Level AU Peace and Security Council Meeting on South Sudan.

The meeting stressed the importance of taking advantage of all available African capabilities to address the situation in South Sudan particularly the capacities of Member States that would be ready to participate effectively in the proposed Regional Protection Force (RPF). Therefore, the importance of this meeting cannot be over emphasized as Zambia is a leading contributor of peace-keeping forces to conflicts on the continent.

The house Mr. Speaker, may also wish to learn that the meeting also noted with concern, that despite its efforts, Africa continued to face serious conflicts and crises with devastating humanitarian and social economic consequences. In this regard, the Peace and Security Council members urgently appealed for stronger concerted action in the area of conflict prevention, management and resolution, as well as in the area of peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

His Excellency the President also held a number of bilateral meetings, prominent among them was the meeting with Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield, the U.S Under Secretary of State for African Affairs. During the discussions, various bilateral and multilateral issues of common interest were discussed.

His Excellency the President also held talks with the Chief Executives of various US companies. The bilateral meetings were

fruitful as this will lead to increased cooperation by way of additional development programmes and investment.

Mr. Speaker,

Zambia also participated in the High Level Meeting on antimicrobial resistance whose objective was to increase political awareness, engagement and leadership as well as strengthen multi-sectoral action on antimicrobial resistance.

Zambia called for support from the World Health Organization (WHO) to provide technical support in strengthening surveillance systems to identify global trends for informed decision making especially for developing countries.

Sir, Zambia re-affirmed her commitment to addressing antimicrobial resistance, including the development of a national policy, with support from WHO, the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and FAO in line with the provisions of the Global Action Plan.

During the bilateral meetings on the sidelines of this High level meeting, Zambia secured pledges of support towards the enhancement of the Zambia health sector.

Mr. Speaker,

During the UN High Level Segment, Zambia, in her capacity as Chair of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) organised a Ministerial Meeting of LLDCs.

You may wish to note that as Chair, Zambia was commended for her effort in coordinating the activities of the Group as well as steering its agenda. In light of the vulnerability and challenges facing LLDCs, the meeting stressed the need for the implementation of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development through the revitalised Global Partnerships.

Mr. Speaker,

You may wish to note, and especially in view of the foregoing submission, that Zambia's participation at the annual sessions of the United Nations General Assembly is of great benefit to the country as it accords an opportunity for His Excellency the President to meet and confer with other global Heads of State and Government on bilateral matters as well as key players on global issues as part of Government's efforts to advance the country's national interests. Furthermore, the participation of the Head of State at this forum, provides a platform for Zambia to influence negotiations, discussions and decisions at the very summit of global diplomacy.

In conclusion, Sir, I wish to emphasise that the Patriotic Front Government will work to ensure that Zambia remains committed to the ideals and agenda of the United Nations aimed at maintaining international peace and security; promoting human rights, fostering social and economic development; protecting the environment; and providing humanitarian aid in cases of famine, natural disaster, and armed conflict.

In order to safeguard and promote our national interest, my Ministry will endeavour to ensure that Zambia will, and should in the future, continue to participate at this very important multilateral fora, at the very highest level.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you!