



# REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA



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**STATEMENT BY**  
**HIS EXCELLENCY MR. EDGAR CHAGWA LUNGU**  
**PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA**  
**AT THE**  
**PLENARY OF THE GENERAL DEBATE**  
**OF THE SEVENTY-THIRD SESSION**  
**OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

Tuesday, 25<sup>th</sup> September, 2018  
NEW YORK

- **YOUR EXCELLENCY MS. MARÍA FERNANDA ESPINOSA GARCÉS,  
PRESIDENT OF THE 73<sup>rd</sup> SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY,**
- **THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-GENERAL, MR. ANTÓNIO  
GUTERRES,**
- **EXCELLENCIES,**
- **DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN**

Let me join other world leaders in congratulating you on your election as President of the 73<sup>rd</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly. Zambia is delighted that after a decade, (2007 to 2018), a woman has yet again taken up this important seat at the helm of global governance as the fourth woman President of the General Assembly since the establishment of this world body.

As the United Nations (UN) celebrates its 73<sup>rd</sup> anniversary next month, its relevance to the people it serves should continue to be magnified in the promotion of international peace, cooperation and the development of sustainable societies free of hunger, poverty and disease. In striving to make the United Nations relevant to all, we should endeavour to explore new ideas and best practices to meet expectations of our people, amidst a renewed necessity for effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability in the utilisation of limited global resources.

In pursuit of this year's theme, and focusing on the Priorities of the General Assembly as outlined by your office, we are confident that you will also bring to the fore, a fresh dimension, as we jointly seek solutions to global economic, social and political challenges. Zambia stands ready to fully support you madam President as you diligently discharge the responsibility of this Assembly.

**Madam President,**

I am coming from a Continent that should be standing tall and moving towards rapid human security, economic transformation and infrastructure development. Indeed a lot should have changed in Africa since the formation of the United Nations 73 years ago. Yet until recently, Africa's economic structure has changed very little, a concern which has been voiced at both continental

and global fora. The effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the African Agenda 2063 therefore, present huge opportunities for Africa to revitalise its growth and further accelerate its transformation, as both frameworks seek to achieve inclusive growth, sustainable development, peace and security for the continent.

The development path of Zambia guided by its “Vision 2030”, through the implementation of the Seventh National Development Plan, is intended to make the nation a prosperous middle-income one by 2030. To achieve this, however, we must overcome many hurdles. Our economy, as with many other developing economies, largely depends on primary commodities for its economic growth and has not been spared by the negative impacts of declining commodity prices on the international market.

My Government is, nevertheless, committed and determined to overcome this challenge by creating a diversified and resilient economy driven, among others, by agriculture, tourism and the energy sectors and supported with a robust infrastructure development and conducive policy frameworks. My Government also recognises that to deliver inclusive and equitable development to the citizens, we need strengthened mutually beneficial partnerships in the context of South-South Cooperation and with our development partners. Regional and development cooperation therefore, remain crucial to unlocking diversified growth.

### **Madam President**

Zambia is dedicated to the implementation of the Africa Union Agenda 2063, the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the Sustainable Development Goals, including on climate change and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for development. That is why my government has mainstreamed these global development agendas in its 7<sup>th</sup> National Development Plan.

My government has consequently, been making progress in infrastructure development as a key enabler and for better capitalisation of the broad-based recovery and improved outlook of the economy. Infrastructure development in road construction and rehabilitation, expansion and construction of hydro-power stations, as well as, diversification of energy to renewable energy such as solar, the rehabilitation of railway lines, construction and modernization of

airports, have been some of the key programmes my government has recently undertaken.

We are further implementing several policy and structural reforms under the Economic Stabilisation and Growth Programme (ESGP), which has included measures on: improving domestic resource mobilization through modernization and automation of revenue collection processes, enhancing of tax incentives, and broadening the tax base of the economy.

Whilst we pursue these goals, we are mindful of the challenges in financing development, as well as the declining resources and official development assistance, especially to countries in special situations such as LDCs and LLDCs. We therefore call upon all partners to work with us, and ensure that together, we effectively implement the Sustainable Development Goals.

In this regard, let me convey my best wishes for the success of the second UN High Level Conference on South-South Cooperation to be hosted in Buenos Aires, Argentina in March 2019. We believe it is an opportunity to register significant progress for development cooperation, and in solidarity to advance the cooperation among the countries of the south, and we must all strive to achieve this goal.

**Madam President,**

Since 1945, the United Nations and the international community have been consistently and strongly advocating the need for the preservation and promotion of peace. A number of recent development frameworks have also put due attention on the importance of protecting global peace and security. The United Nations is a family where each nation, each person should feel protected from conflict, sexual violence, discord and other undesirable consequences of natural or human activity.

My Government therefore, fully supports Resolution 2378 (2017) which focuses on peacekeeping reforms, with Member States being the center of gravity through mediation, ceasefire agreements, monitoring and implementation of all peace accords. Zambia also commits itself to the Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) initiative of the United Nations Secretary General as contained in the Declaration of Shared Commitments for United Nations Peacekeeping.

I am glad to further state that, my Government has in the recent past increased its participation in UN peacekeeping operations, and stands as one of the major troop and police contributing countries in redressing conflicts

around the world. Additionally, Zambia has increased the number of Women participation in peacekeeping operations as an added dimension to effective protection of women and children in conflict zones. We also join other Member States in saluting the gallant men and women in blue helmets for the sacrifices they are making.

In further contribution to the peace agenda, Zambia recently took up the Chairmanship of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security of the Southern African Development Community up to August 2019. We are grateful to the regional leadership for entrusting us with this important responsibility. I can only assure you that we will discharge this duty with utmost dedication. To our friends and partners around the world, I call upon you to work with us as we continue to steer the SADC security architecture, keeping in mind our overall responsibilities to each of the almost 300 million people of the region. My Government is keen to learn and exchange ideas on how we can achieve the best results.

My Government will in this regard, continue to support all United Nations peacekeeping mandates that bring to the fore the highest standards of UN commitment towards conflict prevention, management and resolution.

**Madam President,**

On gender equality and women's economic empowerment, I wish to reaffirm the commitment of my Government to eliminating all forms of violence and discrimination against women and girls. A conducive policy and legislative environment is further strengthened through the review and enactment of new legislation and policies that are gender responsive.

Consequently, the implementation of 50-50 Enrolment Policy is making head ways as schools are now compelled by law to enrol an equal number of girls and boys. Since last year, 2017, my Government commenced the distribution of free sanitary towels to girls in rural and per-urban areas in an effort to retain them in school. This is out of the realisation that the lack of proper sanitary towels, limits girls' access to education. I further wish to mention that the continuous implementation of the re-entry policy for pregnant girls is a success, as a number of girl children have been retained in school after giving birth, a measure we believe is critical in promoting equal opportunities for Girls.

I am pleased to inform you that our traditional rulers in all parts of the country including in the remotest areas, have come out in full force in fighting child

early and forced marriages. We believe that these and many other efforts will lay a strong foundation for the attainment of sustainable development goals and in particular goal number five (5), on gender equality and women's economic empowerment.

**Madam President,**

The world has continued to witness unprecedented large movements of refugees and migrants, resulting in political, social-economic and human rights ramifications in a number of countries. Large movements of refugees and migrants are too vast for one country to handle alone. Thousands of refugees and migrants continue to die every day while looking for safety and dignity in other countries. We stress the importance of collaborative efforts of the global community in order to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration involving full respect for human rights and the humane treatment of migrants and refugees.

We believe that if well managed, migration has the potential to contribute to the social-development of our countries, both countries of origin and destination. We, therefore, welcome the convening of the Conference on International Migration this December, and look forward to the adoption of the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, the first of its kind.

My Government is confident that the Compact on Migration provides us the opportunity to improve the global governance of migration, as well as strengthen the contribution of migrants to sustainable development.

**Madam President**

I take this opportunity to underline the centrality of the principle of responsibility sharing for hosting and supporting the world's refugees, taking into account the differing national capacities and resources among Member States. As one of the countries selected for the application of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework, Zambia looks forward to the adoption of the Compact on Refugees which has among others, highlighted the specific actions needed to ease pressure on refugee hosting countries and communities.

Let me reaffirm my Government's commitment to its international obligations, under the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol relating to the status of refugees. Under these instruments, Zambia takes its responsibility to offer protection to those who seek asylum seriously and will continue to play a

meaningful role in assisting people affected by conflict situations, human rights violations and other threats to their wellbeing.

**Madam President**

I wish to recognize the decision by the Secretary-General and his team for the progress made in undertaking the mandate on the reform of the United Nations Development System, Management and the Peace and Security Pillar.

It is with deep concern, however, that little or no progress has been made on reform of the Security Council. It will be recalled that in 2000, during the Millennium Summit, World Leaders called for early conclusion to the negotiations on Security Council reform. In 2005 during the World Summit, leaders expressed concern at the slow pace of progress and urged negotiations on Security Council reform to be expedited. Thirteen years later, we are still no closer to agreement on such a fundamental issue that seeks to make the United Nations truly representative, democratic and effective.

Next year, 2019, will mark the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary since the item of reform of the Security Council was put on the agenda of the General Assembly. You, Madam President, have been entrusted by world leaders to lead the process of reforming the Security Council. We hope that you can report substantive progress by the time we mark the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary milestone.

I wish, in this regard, to reiterate that Africa remains steadfast and united in its call for two permanent members in the Security Council with all the privileges and obligations that come with that status, and five non-permanent seats. Not only is this a matter of common decency and correction of a historical injustice, but it is also a matter of restoring the dignity of Africa, which currently remains the only continent that does not have representation in the permanent category of the Security Council. It is in this vein that we also support the call for a non-permanent seat for Small Island Developing Countries whose challenges are so unique that it is imperative that their perspective be incorporated as a new dimension to the UN's approach to international peace and security.

I thank you for your attention.