



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA



Permanent Mission of Zambia to the United Nations, 237 East 52nd Street, New York, NY 10022
Tex: (212) 888-5770 Fax: (212) 888-5213 E-mail: zambia@un.int

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STATEMENT BY

**HIS EXCELENCY MR. TENS C. KAPOMA
AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

AT

**THE THIRTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE
COMMISSION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

3RD TO 7TH APRIL, 2006

AT THE

UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS

**NEW YORK
April 5, 2006**

Mr. Chairman

Distinguished delegates,

On behalf of my delegation, I wish to congratulate you and the other members of the Bureau on your election and assure you of my delegation's full support.

Zambia associates itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

We thank the Secretary General for the reports before the Commission which give a useful assessment of the work being carried out in the area of population and development and therefore provides a good basis for our deliberations.

We are also pleased that the Commission's 39th session will focus on International Migration. We take cognizance of the Secretary-General's observation in his 2002 report entitled: "Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change" (contained in document A/57/387corr.1), that the rising number of international migrants, their diversification in terms of origin and destination are among the issues that have increasingly made international migration a priority. These are indeed important issues for my delegation and we look forward for constructive engagement with other delegations on these issues.

Mr. Chairman,

Zambia's population has been steadily increasing at the rate of 2.4 percent annually. According to the National Population and Housing Census of 2000, the population of Zambia was 9.8 million. Projections based on the same census show that the population will be 13.2 million in 2010 at the next census and 15.3 million in 2015.

The Zambian government recognizes that human population is both an agent and beneficiary of development. The distribution and growth rate of the population as well as the basic demographic processes of fertility, mortality and migration affect development. Therefore, these factors are seen as central in the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes to accelerate sustainable development.

The government of the Republic of Zambia has acknowledged that development planning and plan implementation processes should aim at accommodating the increased demand for goods and services brought about by increases in the size and growth rate of the population. These processes should also aim at influencing the population dynamics and their determinants so as to keep the size, composition, structure, distribution at optimal levels.

Mr Chairman,

The national population policy was first promulgated in 1989 however, the country's population growth rate has remained high at an average growth rate of 2.4 percent and the population factors have continued to act as serious challenges to sustainable development. To address these challenges it was necessary to revise the 1989 national population policy. The impetus for the revision of the first national population policy was accelerated by the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). The ICPD offered a useful outline on the emerging issues such as HIV/AIDS, gender and adolescent reproductive health and a new global perspective on population and development.

The Zambia Inter-agency Technical Committee on Population (ITCP) thereafter established a sub-committee composed of members from government, Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) and the University of Zambia in December 1996. This sub-committee met to revise the 1989 population policy, and later presented it to the full Inter-agency Technical Committee on Population (ITCP). Considering that the revised national population policy required wider consultations before its presentation to government for adoption, a national population policy conference was held in 1998 for all stakeholders. The conference deferred the finalisation of the policy to take into account the 2000 census, thereafter in 2005, the ITCP finalised the policy which is now being considered by Government.

Mr. Chairman,

The Zambian government strongly supports the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action. However, the implementation of the programme of action has been slow due to the fact that population issues were not factored in previous national planning documents such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) 2002 – 2004 and the Transitional National Development Plan (TNDP) 2002 – 2005. Nevertheless, the successor planning documents which are still under preparation such as the national long term vision 2030 and the fifth national development plan 2006 – 2010 have integrated population variables in their programmes.

In order to address the challenges of Zambia's population, government has adopted a number of policies such as the gender policy, youth policy and the national employment and labour market policy to mention but a few. These policies contain guiding principles for the government and the Zambian population on the programmes aimed at addressing the challenges.

Mr. Chairman,

With regard to international migration, Zambia's experience in this area has been mainly on the brain drain, where skilled manpower seek employment in other countries especially in the health sector. In addressing the brain drain Zambia has adopted a comprehensive health strategic plan.

On the issue of refugees, Zambia has had a long history of hosting large number of refugees which has had an impact on the population growth rate. These large influxes have mainly been due to independence struggles in the Southern African region in the 60s through to the early 80s and later the post-independence conflicts. By the year 2000, large numbers of refugees had migrated to Zambia, some of whom have settled and socially been integrated in local communities. In most cases immigrants share the same ethnic and other ties with Zambians. Some of the refugees are resident in designated sites. The summary report for the 2000 Census of Population and Housing indicates that the population growth rate in districts hosting refugees was higher compared to other districts. In order to address international forced migration, Zambia has been involved in peace talks in the region and has also embarked on the voluntary repatriation exercise of refugees to their countries of origin.

Mr. Chairman,

Finally, an analysis of the demographic and socio-economic development situation of Zambia reveals that there are still a number of population concerns that need to be addressed as part of the development programmes and strategies. Zambia therefore welcomes continued support and cooperation from the International Community and all stakeholders.

My delegation hopes that this session will renew our collective efforts in integrating international migration population variables in development and further contribute to the high-level-dialogue on international migration.

Thank you.