

**Statement to the Commission on Population and Development
Acting as Preparatory Committee for the Special Session
of the General Assembly**

As written



**INFORMATION SECTION / PERMANENT MISSION OF ZAMBIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS
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STATEMENT BY

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TO THE

**PREPARATORY MEETING OF THE SPECIAL SESSION OF
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

ON THE

**REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME OF ACTION**

NEW YORK

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CHAIRPERSON,

LET ME BEGIN BY CONGRATULATING YOU AND THE MEMBERS OF THE BUREAU ON YOUR ELECTION. I WISH TO ASSURE YOU OF THE FULL COOPERATION OF MY DELEGATION. I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK DR. NAFIS **SADIK** FOR HER INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT.

WE ARE HAPPY THAT THE UNITED NATIONS HAS ORGANISED THIS PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE FORTHCOMING SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO BE HELD IN JUNE, WHOSE OBJECTIVE IS TO REVIEW AND APPRAISE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CAIRO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND **DEVELOPMENT** PLAN OF ACTION. IT IS A TESTIMONY THAT AS A FAMILY OF NATIONS WE ARE ALL CONCERNED WITH THE NEED FOR SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT.

IT IS FOR THIS REASON **THAT MY** COUNTRY IS HAPPY TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS MEETING WHICH WILL PAVE THE WAY FOR THE JUNE SESSION AT WHICH WE WILL WANT TO BE COUNTED AS PART OF THE VOICE OF THE CONSENSUS THAT WILL EMERGE.

CHAIRPERSON,

ZAMBIA HAS EXPERIENCED UNFAVOURABLE SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS FROM THE MID 70'S. OUR GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT AND AVAILABILITY OF SOCIAL SERVICES HAVE AMONGST OTHERS BEEN AFFECTED BY RAPID POPULATION GROWTH AND THE DEBT CRISIS. LIKE MANY DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, WE HAVE FOR SEVERAL YEARS WORKED VERY HARD TO REVERSE THE POOR ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE, BUT OUR EFFORTS HAVE NOT YIELDED TANGIBLE RESULTS. THE DEBT BURDEN HAS CERTAINLY BECOME UNSUSTAINABLE.

IT IS THEREFORE GRATIFYING, CHAIRPERSON, TO HEAR OUR CALLS FOR THE CANCELLATION OF DEBTS OF THE HEAVILY INDEBTED POOR COUNTRIES BEING ACKNOWLEDGED BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT THESE CALLS WILL BE EMBRACED BY THE G7 AT THE NEXT SUMMIT, IN THE INTEREST OF SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT OF POOR COUNTRIES, **LIKE ZAMBIA**.

CHAIRPERSON,

‘THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ICPD PROGRAMME OF ACTION HAS BEEN HAMPERED BY OUR SEVERE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. HOWEVER, IMPORTANT PROGRESS HAS BEEN RECORDED IN AREAS SUCH AS THE REVISION OF OUR

NATIONAL POPULATION POLICY TO INCLUDE EMERGING CONCERNS LIKE HIV/AIDS, WHICH HAVE HITHERTO NOT ATTRACTED MUCH ATTENTION. PROGRESS HAS ALSO BEEN MADE IN ADDRESSING GENDER, ENVIRONMENT, TEENAGE PREGNANCY, YOUTH PROBLEMS AND THE BROADER CONCEPT OF REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH.

IN ADDITION, THE NATIONAL GENDER POLICY, AND POLICIES ON FAMILY PLANNING, AND SAFE MOTHERHOOD HAVE BEEN FORMULATED. GOVERNMENT HAS ALSO BEEN IMPLEMENTING AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PROGRAMMES ON FEMALE EDUCATION AIMED AT MEETING THE ICPD GOALS AND COMMITMENTS. TO THIS EFFECT GOVERNMENT HAS INCREASED ALLOCATION TO THE HEALTH AND EDUCATION SECTORS IN THE 1999 BUDGET BY 18%.

THE FORMATION OF THE ZAMBIA ALL PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT (ZAPPD) IS A MILESTONE IN ENSURING THAT ADVOCACY FOR POPULATION ISSUES IS SPEARHEADED AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL.

CHAIRPERSON,

DESPITE ALL THESE EFFORTS, THE POPULATION OF ZAMBIA HAS GROWN RAPIDLY OVER THE YEARS AND THIS GROWTH IS ATTRIBUTED TO NATURAL INCREASE. FOR INSTANCE, OUR TOTAL POPULATION GREW FROM ESTIMATED

3.5 MILLION IN 1963 TO AN ESTIMATED 10.1 MILLION IN 1998. DURING THIS PERIOD IT WAS ESTIMATED THAT 51 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION WERE FEMALES. IN 1990, NEARLY HALF OF THE POPULATION WAS UNDER FIFTEEN YEARS OF AGE.

FEMALES IN THE REPRODUCTIVE AGES (15-49 YEARS) COMPRISED 24.0 PERCENT OF THE NATION'S POPULATION. THE TOTAL FERTILITY RATE WAS ESTIMATED AT 6.5 IN 1992 AND 6.1 IN 1996.

CHAIRPERSON,

LEVELS OF INFANT AND MATERNAL MORTALITY RATES WHICH DECLINED CONSIDERABLY BETWEEN 1963 AND 1980, HAVE BEEN RISING. THE RECENT INCREASES IN MORTALITY HAVE LED TO SUBSTANTIAL DECLINES IN LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH. THIS HAS DROPPED FROM 52.0 YEARS IN 1980 TO 43.5 YEARS IN 1996 FOR BOTH MEN AND WOMEN.

OVERALL INTERNAL MIGRATION HAS BEEN DECLINING SINCE 1980. IT IS CURRENTLY ESTIMATED THAT 61% OF THE POPULATION IS IN RURAL AREAS WHILE THE NET MIGRATION HAS MOVED FROM 6.2% TO 3.15% DURING 1980 TO 1990 PERIOD. THE MAJOR PARTICIPANTS IN THE MIGRATION HAS BEEN THE YOUTH.

CHAIRPERSON,

DESPITE THE PREVAILING SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, THE ZAMBIAN GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO CREATING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR TACKLING POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES. BUT IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THE ICPD GOALS, THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY MUST PROMOTE A SUPPORTIVE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT TO ENABLE ZAMBIA AND OTHER DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ACHIEVE SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH IN THE CONTEXT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

CHAIRPERSON,

EFFORTS SHOULD BE MADE TO SUPPORT ZAMBIA IN HER QUEST TO ERADICATE POVERTY BY STIMULATING DIRECT INVESTMENT, CANCELLATION OF DEBT AND ENSURING THAT THE STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT PROGRAMME HAS A HUMAN FACE AND IS RESPONSIVE TO SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS.

EFFORTS BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE THE CORNERSTONE OF ASSISTANCE TO THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. THIS ASSISTANCE SHOULD BE DESIGNED IN A MANNER THAT ALSO ENCOURAGES SOUTH TO SOUTH CO-OPERATION.

IN ORDER TO ADDRESS THE EXPECTATIONS OF THE YOUTHFUL POPULATION SUCH AS EMPLOYMENT GENERATION, EDUCATION AND TRAINING, UN-MET REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH NEEDS, AND OTHERS. THE **ZAMBIAN** GOVERNMENT WILL FACILITATE THE PROVISION OF **PROGRAMMES** TO MEET REPRODUCTIVE AND SEXUAL HEALTH, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL NEEDS OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE.

WITH REGARD TO RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION, MY GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE WITH THE DELIBERATE POLICY OF INVESTING IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT, TO ENSURE RURAL LIVING IS ATTRACTIVE TO DISCOURAGE THE RURAL-URBAN DRIFT, ESPECIALLY OF THE YOUTH.

CHAIRPERSON,

THE ZAMBIAN GOVERNMENT WILL ALSO ENSURE THAT HUMAN RIGHTS OF MIGRANTS, REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS, INCLUDING THEIR REPKODUCTIVE HEALTH RIGHTS ARE OBSERVED AND PROTECTED.

CHAIRPERSON,

ALTHOUGH MY **GOVERNMENT** HAS INITIATED LEGISLATIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE MEASURES DESIGNED TO FOSTER SUSTAINABLE RESOURCE USE AND PREVENT ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION, POPULATION ISSUES ARE YET

TO BE SUFFICIENTLY INTEGRATED INTO ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT, POLICY AND PLANNING. THIS WOULD THEREFORE, REQUIRE THAT POLICY MAKERS, PLANNERS, AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTERS AT NATIONAL AND LOCAL LEVELS ARE TRAINED TO BETTER UNDERSTAND POPULATION, ENVIRONMENTAL AND MACRO-ECONOMIC LINKAGES.

CHAIRPERSON,

IN ORDER TO IMPROVE COVERAGE OF FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES, THE GOVERNMENT HAS ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING STRATEGIES:

DISSEMINATION OF USER FRIENDLY POLICIES AND GUIDELINES TO ALL SERVICE DELIVERY POINTS;

IMPROVEMENT OF SKILLS OF HEALTH PROVIDERS THROUGH IN-SERVICE TRAINING AND INCLUSION OF THE LATEST DEVELOPMENT IN PI&E-SERVICE TRAINING;

STRENGTHENING SOCIAL MARKETING SKILLS FOR INFORMATION, EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGNS;

INCLUSION OF ISSUES OF MALE INVOLVEMENT IN ALL CURRICULA OF FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION AND PEER EDUCATION GROUPS AND;

ENHANCING SAFE MOTHERHOOD PROGRAMMES.

CHAIRPERSON,

THE HIV/AIDS EPIDEMIC IN THE COUNTRY HAS POSED A VERY SERIOUS CONCERN AND PRIORITY HAS BEEN GIVEN TO ITS CONTROL. IN THIS REGARD, APART FROM COLLABORATING WITH THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY IN SEEKING THE CURE, BEHAVIOUR CHANGE STRATEGIES AND CAMPAIGNS ARE BEING STRENGTHENED, INCLUDING PROVIDING VOLUNTARY COUNSELLING AND TESTING FACILITIES AND MAKING MALE AND FEMALE CONDOMS MORE WIDELY AVAILABLE AND ACCESSIBLE.

ZAMBIA IS ALSO PROVIDING REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SERVICES TO ADOLESCENTS. STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PARENTS AND CHILDREN ARE BEING ENCOURAGED AND THE PROBLEM OF NEGATIVE ATTITUDES OF HEALTH PROVIDERS TO ADOLESCENTS IS ALSO BEING ADDRESSED.

CHAIRPERSON,

ABORTION IN ZAMBIA IS LEGAL, SUBJECT TO THE FULFILMENT OF A NUMBER OF LEGAL REQUIREMENTS. ILLEGAL ABORTIONS, HOWEVER, ARE A MAJOR CAUSE OF MATERNAL MORTALITY. ABORTION IS NOT USED AS A METHOD

OF CONTRACEPTION, BUT IT HAS BEEN FOUND NECESSARY TO INTRODUCE PRE AND POST ABORTION CARE AND COUNSELLING IN ALL PROVINCIAL HOSPITALS.

CHAIRPERSON,

ZAMBIA STRONGLY SUPPORTS THE DEBT CANCELLATION INITIATIVE AND URGES THAT MECHANISMS BE CREATED TO EXPEDITE THIS CONSIDERATION AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION. AGREEMENTS INVOLVING DEBT SWAPS FOR BASIC SOCIAL SERVICE INVESTMENT, PARTICULARLY IN THE AREA OF POPULATION, EDUCATION AND HEALTH INCLUDING HIV/AIDS SHOULD BE GIVEN MAXIMUM CONSIDERATION.

CHAIRPERSON,

LET ME CONCLUDE BY RE-STATING THAT ZAMBIA HAS THE POLITICAL WILL AND COMMITMENT TO ENSURE THE SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ICPD PROGRAMME OF ACTION AS PART OF THE NATIONS DEVELOPMENT AGENDA.

THANK YOU.