

# REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA



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## STATEMENT

BY

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MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**DELIVERED TO THE**

**UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
SPECIAL SESSION ON HIV AND AIDS (UNGASS)  
31<sup>ST</sup> MAY- 2<sup>ND</sup> JUNE 2006**

New York  
June 2, 2006

**Mr. President,  
Secretary General,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and gentlemen,**

In May 2006, the African Region adopted Africa's common position to the UNGASS on AIDS with the theme on universal access to HIV-AIDS- TB and Malaria by 2010.

Zambia aligns itself to the statement delivered by the President of the Republic of the Congo H.E. Denis Sassou - Nguesso and Chairman of the AU, on behalf of the African Group.

**Mr. President,**

The HIV prevalence rate in Zambia is 16 percent among the adult population 15-49 years and this translates to 1 million Zambians infected with HIV. The infection rate is higher among women **18%** than men **13%**. Forty (40%) percent of infants born of HIV positive mothers are infected with HIV. Over 200,000 are in need of anti-retroviral therapy (ART).

**Mr. President,**

Zambia's Vision is, to become a nation free from the crisis of HIV and AIDS. Her Mission is - To provide national leadership for a coordinated fight against HIV/AIDS in order to eliminate its associated Opportunistic Infections for the benefit of the society. The Goal is-To reduce HIV/STD transmission among Zambians and to reduce the socio-economic impact of AIDS.

My Government declared AIDS a national crisis and it has been recognized as a developmental issue. As a result, anti AIDS strategies have been incorporated into our National Development Plan 2006-2010.

**Mr. President,**

I wish to state that the Government and Stakeholders in Zambia are moving the Three Ones from principle into practice. Evidence strongly indicates that high levels of commitment exist in not only supporting the Three Ones but also in improving their application.

**Mr. President,**

Zambia promotes multi pronged prevention strategies. Recently, Zambia introduced routine testing to all pregnant mothers with an option to opt out. In addition, Zambia recognizes the importance of the AIDS vaccine and as a result, we recently launched a vaccine trial.

Zambia also introduced ART using her own resources in 2003 and has introduced free Anti Retroviral Therapy (ART) services from August 2005.

Within twenty four months, the Ministry of Health (MoH, 2005) with the support of the Global Fund and PEPFAR had put 50,000 people on ART out of an estimated number of 200,000 people living with AIDS. This translated to 25% of those in need.

Zambia commits herself to an accelerated treatment programme including paediatric treatment and Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV-AIDS (PMTCT) plus.

**Mr. President,**

AIDS has left an estimated 750,000 orphans. It is estimated that 6% of these children are on the streets and less than 1 % live in orphanages. It is projected that as much as 20% of all children in the country will be orphaned by 2015. This will have negative socio-economic implications if the situation is not addressed.

To address this, my Government has introduced a variety of measures including free basic education, skills training and AIDS prevention programmes. In addition to this, civil society has undertaken many creative programmes to mitigate the impact of HIV/AIDS for widows and vulnerable children.

**Mr. President,**

My Government recognizes that stigma and discrimination fuels the pandemic and hinders people living with HIV from accessing treatment and care programmes. In this regard, my Government remains committed to the elimination of violence against women and AIDS-associated stigma and discrimination and protection of the human rights of people living with HIV/AIDS.

**Mr. President,**

While we have made several strides towards fighting the epidemic, we recognize that we need to scale up our efforts in many areas particularly in strengthening health systems including human resources at all levels. We therefore, would like to see strengthen collaboration with our international partners in the fight against HIV/AIDS to ensure predictable and sustain funding and support.

**Mr. President,**

In conclusion, HIV-AIDS remains a global emergency, as each life lost due to AIDS marks a milestone defeat in our fight against AIDS. Therefore, we need to do much more if we are to reverse and indeed to end this pandemic. It is the hope of my Government that the declaration that we adopt today will renew the commitments and resolve of the International community in galvanizing global commitment and action to combat and bring to an end AIDS, and therefore transform for the better the lives of many people who have been infected and affected by this disease.

Thank you.