



**REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA
MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING**

**STATEMENT FOR USE BY THE HONOURABLE MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
PLANNING AT THE UNITED NATIONS 54TH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON
POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT -
19TH TO 23RD APRIL 2021**

“POPULATION, FOOD SECURITY, NUTRITION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT”

**POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
APRIL 2021
Chairperson,**

Allow me to join others that have spoken before me to congratulate you on your election as Chair of the 54th Session of the Commission on Population and Development and other members of the Bureau on their election. We are confident that under your leadership, the work of this Commission will be a success.

The Zambian Government fully recognizes the importance of population growth in the development trajectory of the country. Zambia's population has been growing at a rate of 2.8 percent over the past decade and is estimated at 18.4 million people. Out of this population, 1.73 million people are likely to face high levels of acute food insecurity. This also includes an estimated 1.5 million people in crisis and around 240,000 people in emergency situations, requiring humanitarian action to reduce food gaps and restoration of their livelihoods.

Chairperson,

In 2019, Prevalence of Undernourishment estimated that the proportion of the population facing severe food deprivation and hunger in Zambia was above 45 percent and could have worsened due to the impact of climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic. This has resulted in limited food access to low income groups.

Chairperson,

To address these challenges, Government is promoting youth participation in the sustainable development agenda through empowerment programmes such as the Youth in Agriculture Programme and Youth Resettlement Schemes among others. A total of 18,515 youths are beneficiaries under the 470 million Kwacha Multi-Sectoral Youth Empowerment Programme.

Further, Government has continued to make steady progress in reducing Zambia's Hunger Index during in the last 30 years with the score having declined from 50.9 in 2000 to 38.1 percent in 2019. This has been achieved by placing poverty and hunger reduction strategies at the core of the country's

development agenda. Zambia will continue to endeavour in ensuring food security for its people by scaling up the implementation of social protection programmes such as the Food Security Pack Programme and the Social Cash Transfer Programme.

In order to enhance household food security, the number of social cash transfer programme beneficiaries has been increased from 700,000 households to 994,000 households in 2021. Under the Food and Security Pack programme, which is aimed at promoting food security by supporting livelihoods of poor and vulnerable, but viable farmers, Government has also increased the number of beneficiaries from 80, 000 households in 2020 to 288,492 households this year,

Chairperson

Government is further scaling-up the implementation of the Nutrition Programme, which is an ongoing multi-sectoral programme aimed at reducing obesity and under-nutrition through the development of nutrition specific programmes. These include policy initiatives such as the 1,000 Most Critical Days Programme, aimed at preventing stunting in children who are less than two years of age. In addition, the National Food and Nutrition Strategic Plan for the period 2017-2021, provides guidance in implementing food and nutrition programmes in Zambia.

In conclusion, I wish to reaffirm Zambia's commitment towards enhancing food security through the reduction of poverty and hunger. The Zambian Government will endeavour to provide its population with access to the right amount and quality of food to improve the nutrition status of the Country. Focus will be on improving the governance of food systems; inclusive and responsible investments in agriculture and rural areas, as well as, strengthening social protection mechanisms for risk reduction.

I thank you.