



# REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA



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**STATEMENT**  
**BY**  
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**AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE**  
**OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA TO THE**  
**UNITED NATIONS**  
**TO THE**  
**FORTY- FIFTH (45) SESSION OF**  
**THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON POPULATION**  
**AND DEVELOPMENT**  
**AGENDA ITEM 4: GENERAL DEBATE ON NATIONAL EXPERIENCE**  
**IN**  
**POPULATION MATTERS: ADOLESCENT AND YOUTH**

*NEW YORK*

*April 24, 2012*

**Mr. Chairman,**

**Distinguished Delegates,**

On behalf of the Zambian delegation, I wish to congratulate you and other members of the Bureau on your election.

**Mr. Chairman,**

This year's theme, which focuses on young people, is very important for our country given that young people account for 34 percent of the total population. Young people in Zambia do not only constitute a significant proportion of the productive population but also in a position to influence political, social and economic change.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Zambia has made strides in uplifting the welfare of young people and I will elaborate on a few.

With regard to the unmet needs in Reproductive Health, HIV and AIDS, the Government has developed an Adolescent Health Strategic Plan (2011-2015), which will significantly contribute to the attainment of national health objectives and the millennium development goals.

On education and life skills, the Government has created an enabling environment for increased investment in the education sector at all levels through both public and private sector initiatives. The Government has also enforced a 50-50 enrolment policy at Basic, High School and Teacher Training College levels. In addition, education materials and bursaries have been provided to vulnerable children and orphans and there are plans to introduce a school feeding programme. Furthermore, since December 2004, Zambia embarked on the rehabilitation and reintegration program for the street children and young people through provision of life skills education. The Government has put in place a national programme to establish skills training centres in each province and a number of them are already operational.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Zambia is committed to creating employment for young people in the formal and informal sectors through a number of interventions such as opening and re-opening of industries; establishing youth friendly credit facilities; re-introducing cooperatives for young people; and the introduction of skills building camps for youth development activities.

In our resolve to attain gender equality and equity, the Zambian Government has created a fully fledged Ministry of Gender and Women Affairs. The enactment of the anti-GBV Law and the strengthening of the Zambia Police Victim Support Unit have added more impetus to the fight against GBV, including child defilement and rape. Zambia has also developed guidelines for survivors of gender based violence, which comprises psychosocial counselling, medical treatment and legal support, and are being utilised through the one stop centre model.

Furthermore, to bridge the gender gap, Zambia introduced a school re-entry policy for girls in 1997, which allows girls who become pregnant to continue with their education after giving birth. This policy has been reinforced by the enactment of the Education Act No. 23 of 2011.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Although Zambia has made strides in uplifting the welfare of young people, a number of challenges still remain. Much more needs to be done in improving the lives of young people on issues pertaining to sexually transmitted infections including HIV and AIDS, early marriages and pregnancies, drugs and alcohol abuse.

Migration, particularly the internal rural-urban drift is another challenge in achieving enhanced economic development. Even though measurement of migration remains a big limitation, most young people who complete school in rural areas more often than not, move to urban areas in search of a better life. This creates congestion in the cities as well as other complex problems, such as, lack of accommodation, poor sanitation, street children, prostitution, HIV and AIDS, unemployment and other youth problems.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Having said all this, Zambia remains committed to implementing in its entirety the Programme of Action of the ICPD adopted in 1994 in relation to the welfare of young people. In line with this commitment, Zambia is a signatory to various international treaties aimed at protecting the welfare of young people and we look forward to a strengthened global partnership in addressing the various problems facing our young people. More resources are needed to strengthen programmes targeting young people but it should also be recognised that young people should be included, as equal partners, in the design and implementation of these programmes. Zambia looks forward to partnering with more stakeholders in raising resources, as well as in implementation of programme interventions for the young people.

**I thank you.**