



Republic of Zambia

**STATEMENT FOR POSSIBLE USE BY HONOURABLE JOSEPH MALANJI, MP
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
AT THE ANNUAL MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE GROUP OF LANDLOCKED
DEVELOPING COUNTRIES**

DATE: 25TH SEPTEMBER, 2019

VENUE: CR 5

Time: 15:00 – 18:00hrs

NEW YORK

- Excellency Tijjani Muhammad-Bande, President of the United Nations of the General Assembly,
- Excellency António Rivas Palacios, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Paraguay and Chairman of the Group of Landlocked developing countries,
- Ms. Fekita Moeloa Utoikamanu, UN Under Secretary General and High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS
- Excellences,
- Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to congratulate the Chairman for successfully convening this annual Ministerial meeting for 2019, and to thank-you for the commitment and leadership of your Government and the Permanent Mission of Paraguay here in New York, for keeping the LLDCs group's focus and aspirations on the UN development agenda during your tenure.

I also congratulate and welcome the incoming Ministerial Chair for the period, 2020-2021, H.E. Mukhtar Tileuberdi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, together with the Government of Kazakhstan for being elected as Chair of the group. May I also offer my congratulations to the newly elected Bureau Members. We are confident that with your commitment, you will ensure that the objectives of the LLDCs group as set in the VPoA, receives further attention on the international development agenda.

This annual meeting is important for Zambia as it is happening at a critical time for our group of Land Locked Developing Countries, when we are reviewing the Vienna Programme of Action (VPoA), under the theme: *"Midterm review of the Vienna Programme of Action: Renewed strength to accelerate implementation and transformation in LLDCs"*.

The Vienna Programme of Action (VPoA) for the Landlocked Developing Countries for the decade 2014 to 2024 that was adopted 5 years ago, at

the Second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), happened to be formulated when Zambia was at the helm of this LLDCs group, and it still requires our recommitment. The programme of Action offers the member states together with our partners and the international community, an opportunity to address the special needs and challenges faced by our group of LLDCs through stronger partnerships.

Although it was adopted in 2014 prior to the adoption in 2016 of the 2030 Agenda, the 17 SDGs, the Paris Agreement to address climate change and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development, it is our firm belief that the 6 priorities outlined in the Vienna programme of Action.

Zambia is committed to supporting the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action priorities, including through the 2015 Livingstone Call for Action that aimed to accelerate the VPOA programme implementation resulting from the three day High-Level Follow-up Meeting to the Second United Nations Conference on LLDCs in Livingstone.

Zambia has made some progress in the implementation of the VPOA priorities at National level in line with the National Development Plans and national policies, although major challenges still remain.

The National development Plans have highlighted the key priorities for the diversification in order to transform our economy and improve people's welfare. Zambia's Seventh National Development Plan 2017 - 2021 being implemented by Government seeks to create a diversified and resilient economy by the year 2021, without leaving any one behind. Three priority areas that have marked some progress in implementing the VPOA through the Plans since 2016 have included;

Fundamental Transit and policy issues:- Zambia recently launched a new National Transport Policy which is poised to transform the country into a multi-modal international transit transport corridor with developed

transport and logistics infrastructure and services for all the modes. This will be combined with other economic, social and environmental factors to ensure the promotion of trade and development as a whole.

Zambia together with our transit and neighbouring countries are working together for the smooth implementation of agreed legal frameworks, transit rules and policies as well as transport and trade facilitation measures. This has been complemented with significant Government investment in the last five years in both road and air transportation infrastructure development and rehabilitation to reposition the country into a transport hub for the region. This has included modern and expanded transport systems such as motorways, airports and rail. The challenges still remain on the high cost of financing infrastructure for vulnerable countries such as ours.

Infrastructure development and Rehabilitation; Zambia has committed to invest heavily in key infrastructure such as renewable energy, water and sanitation systems, connectivity in the key sectors and ICT development, besides the transport infrastructure.

In this regard the installation of Telecommunication towers under phase II of the Telecommunications Towers Project where 318 out of 1,009 towers have been erected. The increased network coverage arising from these towers is promoting the use of electronic platforms by the larger population as well as enhancing efficiency in business and Government transactions. Once finalised, this project is expected to improve coverage from the 84 percent to 95 percent of the country at present.

We have further commenced creation of ICT platforms that are key in enterprise development and delivery of social services. This is well aligned with the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and the AU's Agenda 2063. Although ICT is a catalyst for socio-economic development as it promotes competitiveness is an enabler of good governance, we are

faced with several challenges regarding accessibility and utilization of ICTs. The ICT infrastructure, both public and private, is still inadequate despite the progress.

In structural transformation, with regard to diversification of the economy from copper and base metals production to agriculture, tourism, manufacturing and the mining and processing of precious and semi-precious stones, has been among the key area of focus in the national development plan. Value Chains are also being emphasised with investments and stronger partnerships being sought as well as required technical expertise.

Further, Zambia has also developed a stand-alone Industrial Policy with the aim of better addressing issues of productive capacity as well as the promotion the production and consumption of local contents. The policy also looks at value-addition to products that are locally produced as well as the innovation and technology required in production so as to attain the aim of industrialisation in Zambia.

Government has also established the Industrial Development Corporation which is mobilising private and public-sector financing for large scale investment in strategic sectors of manufacturing, mining, agriculture, and energy among others. Zambia has also made great strides in development of special economic zones and industrial parks, currently the zones are at different levels of development with some already fully operational. We therefore call for stronger partnerships, engagement and investments from the private sector to assist developing countries deliver on the objectives of the Vienna Programme of Action and the SDGs as well.

In the way forward for Government, with regard to diversification of our economy and job creation, premised on value addition to our abundant natural resources and integration of climate smart solutions, there is need for cooperation to expand our support for activities in agriculture, livestock, fisheries, forestry, mining, tourism, water development and

energy which are our climate sensitive natural resources over which 80 percent of the population depends.

Therefore, Zambia calls upon the United Nations system and international organisations, to support LLDCs to enable them accelerate the implementation of the VPoA which will ultimately result in the transformation of our countries for the betterment of all our people. We look forward to a successful midterm review.

I thank you.