

**PLEASE CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**

*(This Document is the Property of the Government of the Republic of Zambia)*



**Republic of Zambia**

**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY**

**MR. CHEMBO F. MBULA  
PERMANENT SECRETARY -A  
FOR THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

**AT THE 21<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL MINISTERIAL MEETING OF MINISTERS OF  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**FOR THE GROUP OF LAND LOCKED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (LLDCS)**

**22 September, 2022**

New York

**H.E Honourable Dr. Lemogang Kwape**

**Minister of Foreign Affairs of Botswana and Global Chair of the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Ministerial Meeting of Foreign Ministers;**

**Your Excellencies, Ministers of Foreign Affairs from LLDCs;**

**H.E. Mr Csaba Korosi, President of the 77<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly;**

**Under – Secretary General and High Representative for LDCs, LLDCS; and SIDs, Madam Rabab Fatima;**

**Distinguished Delegates,**

From the outset, allow me Chair, to thank you and the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, (UN-OHRLLS) for successfully organising the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Ministerial Meeting of Foreign Ministers of Landlocked Developing Countries.

I wish to also thank the UN-OHRLLS for co-organising with the Government of Turkmenistan, the Ministerial Transport Conference for Landlocked Developing Countries that was held in August 2022 in Turkmenbashi. I thank His Excellency Mr. Rashid Meredov, Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan on the elaborate brief presented to us on the outcome of the Ministerial Transport Conference of LLDCs.

Clearly, the Conference was significant as it came up with important recommendations that will accelerate the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action (VPOA) and also provided a preparatory platform for the Third United Nations Conference on LLDCs.

The theme for our meeting this year, “**Accelerating implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic and building momentum towards the Third United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries**” is timely as we ponder on the aftermath of the pandemic during the last two years of the VPoA which comes to an end in 2024.

## **Chairperson,**

The Government of Zambia as you may be aware is surrounded by eight neighboring countries to which we are linked, in this regard we have great need to maintain good relations with each one of them.

We are blessed to be the beacon of peace in the region as we have maintained harmony through the successive administrations that have governed the country. In August 2021, the New Dawn Administration was ushered into Government under the United National Party for National Development (UPND) after the General Elections. The UPND Government is committed to putting in place effective and efficient transport systems to promote regional connectivity and wants to leverage on our geographic disadvantage to turn Zambia into a truly Land-Linked country. Our intention is to transform the country into a Transport and Logistics hub.

## **Chairperson**

Zambia like other LLDCs faces various challenges which are directly related to the country's inherent lack of territorial access to the sea. In comparison to our coastal neighbours, this scenario increases our transaction costs for imports and exports, and has consequently eroded the country's competitive edge, slowed economic growth and negatively affected our capacity to promote sustained socio-economic development.

However, Zambia remains committed to implementing the Vienna Programme of Action (VPoA) and has made progress in the execution of its six priority areas.

## **Chairperson**

Before I go any further, I wish to state that the Covid - 19 Pandemic negatively affected the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action. In order to keep the wheels of the economy going, Zambia and her neighbours had to work through the Regional Economic Communities of SADC, COMESA and the East African Community as well as the African Union to allow for the smooth flow

of goods and services, while at the same time containing the spread of the virus.

The guidelines which were put in place involved the automation and simplification of clearing processes as well as the introduction of pre-clearance of goods and the single window concept. Overall, we observed an increase in the use of ICTs for cargo tracking and the clearance of goods.

### **Chairperson**

Zambia has made strides in improving regional connectivity. While border facilities and procedures have been streamlined and harmonised, leading to some level of increased efficiency, several other transit issues require to be addressed on a country to country basis. There is slow harmonisation and domestication of trade facilitation instruments such as Customs and Immigration matters, Security and Border operating hours with our neighbouring countries.

With regard to Infrastructure Development and Maintenance, there is inadequate infrastructure and missing links in the six (6) key corridors traversing the country. Further, it is costly to coordinate and develop these corridors at the desired pace due to lack of resources. Inadequate resources also make it difficult for road and railway construction, rehabilitation and maintenance. Marine Infrastructure also remains underdeveloped.

Furthermore, our country lacks inter-modal linkages, particularly road to railway transfers and has poor logistics infrastructure and systems, especially at entry points. Although One Stop Border Posts have been established, there is still need to improve efficiency of border management and develop inland dry ports, among others, to facilitate improvements in logistics infrastructure and services to support domestic and regional trade.

### **Chairperson**

The midterm review of the VPoA resulted in call for Land Locked Developing Countries to accelerate the implementation of the VPoA through Structural Economic Transformation. As such this

would strengthen productive capacity through establishment of industrial clusters and invest in much needed technical capacity and specialised know-how to transform natural resources into value added products.

Zambia has prioritised the diversification of the economy from copper and base metals to agricultures, tourism, manufacturing and the mining and processing of precious and semi-precious stones. Value-Chains are also being emphasised and encouraged, and are clearly outlined in our National Development Plans.

### **Chairperson**

Zambia is of the view that financial assistance and resource mobilisation are key to helping the country address the transport connectivity – related constraints and build the physical means for increased mobility of people, goods and services for enhanced production and access to markets.

Zambia is happy with the way that the UN-OHRLLS is collaborating with other entities in the United Nations system and other international organisations such as the World Bank, WTO, WCO and International Road Union, especially after the Midyear Review in supporting LLDCs accelerate the implementation of the VPoA.

It is our hope as a country that in the post Covid -19 era, we should be given the necessary support to actualize the Agreements for development of our transport corridors and infrastructure. On our part, we are willing to leverage on Public – Private Partnership (PPPs) to develop ICTs and the much-needed physical infrastructure.

We remain resolute to working with our neighbouring countries for the smooth implementation of agreed legal frameworks, transit rules and policies as well as the simplification and harmonisation of rules and regulations.

Zambia commits itself to the ideals of the Group of LLDCs and looks forward to working with all stakeholders in preparing for the Third United Nations Conference on LLDCs to be held in 2024.

I thank you.