

STATEMENT TO THE ELEVENTH UNITED NATIONS CONGRESS ON CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE HELD IN BANGKOK, THAILAND FROM 18TH - 25TH APRIL 2005 BY THE HON MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS, DR KALOMBO T. MWANSA, ZAMBIA.

MR PRESIDENT

DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

FIRST AND FOREMOST I WISH TO CONGRATULATE THE HONOURABLE MINISTER OF JUSTICE FOR THAILAND FOR BEING ELECTED AS PRESIDENT OF THE ELEVENTH UNITED NATIONS CONGRESS FOR CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE. SECONDLY, I WISH TO THANK THE UNITED NATIONS FOR ORGANISING AND THE THAI KINGDOM FOR HOSTING THE CONGRESS. ADDITIONALLY I THANK THE THAI PEOPLE FOR THE HOSPITALITY EXTENDED TO MY DELEGATION. THEY ARE A WONDERFUL AND FRIENDLY PEOPLE.

ZAMBIA IS LOCATED IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF AFRICA AND SURROUNDED BY EIGHT FRIENDLY NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES. THIS MAKES THE COUNTRY EXTREMELY VULNERABLE AND ATTRACTIVE TO TRANSNATIONAL CRIMINAL GROUPS OPERATING WITHIN THE SUB-REGION. ADDITIONALLY, THE EXISTENCE OF SEVERAL BORDERS MAKES ZAMBIA VULNERABLE TO ILLEGAL TRANSNATIONAL ACTIVITIES SUCH AS HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND SMUGGLING OF PERSONS.

IN ORDER TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEM OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND SMUGGLING OF PERSONS, MY GOVERNMENT HAS SET UP A TASKFORCE TO LOOK INTO THE ISSUE. COMPOSITION OF THE TASK FORCE INCLUDES ALL GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDERS AND CIVIC SOCIETY. THE TASK FORCE HAS BEEN MANDATED TO DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE POLICY AND PROPOSE APPROPRIATE LEGISLATION IN ORDER TO CRIMINALISE THIS CONDUCT. ALONG WITH LEGISLATION, THE VICTIM SUPPORT UNIT UNDER

THE ZAMBIA POLICE SERVICE WILL BE STRENGTHENED TO ASSIST VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING THROUGH COUNSELLING.

THE PROBLEM OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING IS REAL AND MOST VICTIMS ARE WOMEN AND CHILDREN. THEY ARE USUALLY LURED INTO TRAVELLING TO UNKNOWN PLACES WITHIN AND OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY IN THE QUEST FOR BETTER ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES, BUT THEY END UP BEING DISAPPOINTED AND TRAUMATISED.

ALTHOUGH ZAMBIA HAS NEVER BEEN IN A CONFLICT SITUATION SINCE ATTAINING INDEPENDENCE IN 1964 SHE HAS BEEN EXPERIENCING THE PROLIFERATION OF FIRE ARMS. THIS IS DUE TO PREVIOUS CONFLICTS AND LIBERATION WARS IN THE REGION AND THE MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE FLEEING CONFLICT AREAS, SOME OF WHOM CARRY WITH THEM WEAPONS FROM COUNTRY TO COUNTRY.

IN ORDER TO ADDRESS THE PROLIFERATION OF FIREARMS IN THE COUNTRY, MY GOVERNMENT DECLARED A GENERAL AMNESTY TO PEOPLE IN POSSESSION OF FIRE ARMS TO SURRENDER THEM TO GOVERNMENT WITHOUT BEING PROSECUTED. ADDITIONALLY, A BUY- BACK OF ARMS PROGRAMME WAS ALSO INITIATED. AS A RESULT OF THESE TWO INITIATIVES, A LARGE NUMBER OF ILLEGALLY ACQUIRED FIREARMS HAVE BEEN RECOVERED LEADING TO A SUBSTANTIAL REDUCTION OF SUCH FIREARMS IN THE COUNTRY THEREBY DISRUPTING THE ACTIVITIES OF ORGANISED CRIMINAL GROUPS CONSIDERABLY.

ZAMBIA IS COMMITTED TO JOIN OTHER MEMBER STATES OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN CONTRIBUTING TOWARDS A SAFER WORLD. IT IS MY PLEASURE MR PRESIDENT TO ANNOUNCE TO THIS AUGUST GATHERING THAT ZAMBIA HAS TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF THIS CONGRESS TO DEPOSIT THE INSTRUMENTS OF ACCESSION TO THE TRANSNATIONAL ORGANISED CRIME CONVENTION

AND ALL ITS THREE PROTOCOLS DURING THE BANGKOK 'MINI TREATY.'

MY GOVERNMENT IS WILING TO WORK TOGETHER WITH OTHER NATIONS IN THE ELIMINATION AND REPRESSION OF ORGANISED CRIME AND TERRORISM. TO THIS END, SHE HAS ESTABLISHED JOINT PERMANENT COMMISSIONS OF COOPERATION ON DEFENCE AND SECURITY WITH MOST OF THE COUNTRIES IN THE REGION. THESE ARE BILATERAL AGREEMENTS.

THESE COMMISSIONS MEET ONCE A YEAR IN EACH OTHER'S COUNTRY. THE COMMISSIONS ARE A MECHANISM TO MONITOR AND PREVENT ALL KINDS OF CROSSBORDER CRIMES, INCLUDING THE MOVEMENT OF ILLICIT FIREARMS AND TRAFFICKED HUMANS.

MR PRESIDENT, MY GOVERNMENT RECOGNISES THE FACT THAT ORGANISED CRIME IS USUALLY ACCOMPANIED BY CORRUPTION. MY GOVERNMENT HAS ADOPTED A ZERO TOLERANCE

POLICY AGAINST CORRUPTION. TO THIS END ZAMBIA WILL JOIN OTHER NATIONS IN RATIFYING THE UN CONVENTION AGAINST CORRUPTION. FURTHER MEASURES WILL INCLUDE A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE CURRENT LEGISLATION AGAINST CORRUPTION WITH THE AIM OF INCORPORATING BEST PRACTICES AND RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL INSTRUMENTS..

MR PRESIDENT, THE ANTI CORRUPTION COMMISSION ESTABLISHED TO FIGHT THE SCORGE IN MY COUNTRY ENJOYS FULL OPERATIONAL AUTONOMY WITH POWERS TO INVESTIGATE ALLEGATIONS OF CORRUPTION AND PROSECUTE ON ITS OWN. THIS HAS PROMOTED INTEGRITY, TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE.

ANOTHER AREA OF CONCERN FOR MY GOVERNMENT IS TERRORISM. ZAMBIA MAY NOT HAVE EXPERIENCED SERIOUS ACTS OF TERRORISM ON HER SOIL BUT SOME OF HER NEIGHBOURING

COUNTRIES HAVE BEEN VICTIMS OF SERIOUS TERRORIST CRIME. MY GOVERNMENT RECOGNISES THAT ACTS OF TERRORISM CAN HAPPEN ANYWHERE AND IN THIS REGARD, ZAMBIA IS IN THE PROCESS OF PUTTING TOGETHER DOCUMENTATION TO FACILITATE ACCESSION TO THE VARIOUS COVENTIONS AND PROTOCOLS AIMED AT COMBATINNG TERRORISM. MY GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO THE RATIFICATION, ACCESSION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE VARIOUS UN INSTRUMENTS AIMED AT COMBATTING TERRORISM.

CRIMINALS INVOLVED IN ORGANISED CRIME, TERRORISM, CORRUPTION, AND INDEED MANY OTHER FORMS OF CRIME DEPEND HEAVILY ON LAUNDERED MONEY TO SUSTAIN THEIR CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES. AND AS SUCH THE FORFEITURE OF PROCEEDS OF CRIME INCLUDING LAUNDERED MONEY IS AN INDISPENSEBLE ELEMENT IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CRIME IN GENERAL AND ORGANISED CRIME IN PARTICULAR. IN THIS

REGARD MY GOVERNMENT HAS ENACTED LEGISLATION AGAINST MONEY LAUNDERING WHICH INTER ALIA ESTABLISHES AN ANTI MONEY LAUNDERING AUTHORITY RESPONSIBLE FOR MATTERS RELATING TO THE ENFORCEMENT OF THE LAW.

MR PRESIDENT, IN THE ABSENCE OF CLEAR EVIDENCE OF THE EFFICACY OF THE PRISON/CUSTODY AS AN EFFECCTIVE AND ALL ROUND CRIME PREVENTION STRATEGY ON THE ONE HAND, AND THE GENERAL FAILURE TO IMPROVE PRISONER'S WELFARE ON THE OTHER, THERE IS NEED TO SERIOUSLY CONSIDER OTHER CORRECTIONAL MEASURES. MY COUNTRY ALREADY HAS A NON CUSTODIAL LEGISLATION WHICH WILL CONTINUE TO BE ADMINISTERED WHILE RESEARCH IN RESTORATIVE JUSTICE IS BEING CONDUCTED. RESEARCH IN RESTORATIVE JUST IS REQUIRED IN ORDER TO BUILD A BODY OF EVIDENCE ON ITS EFFICACY, IMPLICATIONS, AND POSSIBLE NEGATIVE BYPRODUCTS.

ZAMBIA, LIKE MOST DEVELOPING COUNTRIES FACES MANY CHALLENGES IN PROVIDING QUALITY SERVICES TO ITS PEOPLE IN MANY AREAS INCLUDING HEALTH, EDUCATION AND HOUSING. PROVISION OF ADEQUATE SECURITY FOR OUR PEOPLE AGAINST CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES IS AN ADDITIONAL CHALLENGE.

ZAMBIA LACKS APPROPRIATE TRAINING FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE FOR OUR LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES DUE TO FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS. ON THE OTHER HAND, OUR LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS HAVE TO DEAL WITH WELL RESOURCED AND SOPHISTICATED CRIMINALS. ALTHOUGH MY GOVERNMENT IS DOING ITS BEST TO ADDRESS SOME OF THE PROBLEMS RELATING TO INSUFFICIENT CAPACITY OF OUR LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES, ZAMBIA WISHES TO ECHO THE DISTINGUISHED NIGERIAN DELEGATE'S CALL FOR TOTAL CANCELLATION OF FOREIGN DEBT. THIS WILL FREE RESOURCES FOR UTILISATION ON, AMONG OTHERS THE MANAGEMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

PROGRAMMES TO ACCEPTABLE INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS.

IN VIEW OF THE ABUNDANT EVIDENCE THAT MOST CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES ARE CROSS BORDER, MY GOVERNMENT IS WILLING TO CONTINUE WORKING WITH OTHER NATIONS IN MEETING THE CHALLENGES POSED BY THREATS OF CRIMINALITY IN ALL IT'S MANIFESTATIONS IN ORDER TO MAKE THE WORLD A SAFER PLACE FOR ALL.

I THANK YOU.