



Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

It is an honour for me to deliver this statement on behalf of the Zambia.

The Zambian government has committed itself to accelerating growth and reducing poverty as the country moves towards upper middle-income status. This commitment is also reflected in the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA), and other global commitments.

To this effect, the progress in the implementation of these commitments have been seen in the various sectors of the economy. The economy grew by 4.1 percent in 2017, compared to 3.8 percent in 2016. Among the key sectors, an improvement was recorded in agriculture, tourism, manufacturing and energy (electricity generation). Electricity generation, increased by 23.3 percent to 14,321,528 Mwh from 11,613,573 Mwh in 2016, on account of increased hydro power generation due to improved water levels.

The Republic of Zambia registered increase in the average enrolment rates in both primary and secondary education. The Net Enrolment Rate (NER) at primary and secondary level stood at 90.4 and 25.4 percent in 2016 while Transition Rate was 66.2 percent at Grade 7-8 and 46.6 percent at Grade 9-10. Further, completion rate stood at 92.4 percent, 68.8 percent and 52.7 percent at Grades 7, 9 and 12, respectively. In addition, the gross secondary school enrolment ratio in 2016 was 45.7 percent. Adult literacy rate stood at 70.2 as at 2010.

Further, the percentage of the population living below the poverty line declined from 68 percent in 2006 to 54 percent in 2015. In rural areas, the percentage of the population living in poverty marginally reduced from 80.3 percent in 2006 to 76.6 percent in 2015, while in urban areas the percentage living in poverty declined from 53 percent in 2006 to 23.4 percent in 2015.

There was a marked improvement in the proportion of individuals that know how to use the internet from 4.8 percent in 2013 to 8.8 percent in 2015. Further, the number of mobile telephone subscribers increased by 5.75 percent from 11,326,570 in 2006 to 12,017,034 in 2016, representing a penetration rate of 74.9 percent.

Zambia registered a decline in maternal mortality from 591 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2007 to 398 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2013-14. Under-5 mortality

However, the Gross National Income is above the required graduation index at US \$1,360 in 2016.

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of the public service for enhanced service delivery; Private Sector Development Reforms - to create an enabling environment for the private sector to efficiently and effectively participate in the socio-economic development of the country; Public Finance Management Reforms - aimed at improving transparency and accountability in the utilisation of public resources, while enhancing systems for accounting for development results; and Financial Sector Development Reforms - aimed at creating an enabling environment to facilitate smooth functioning of financial markets by removing bottlenecks that constrain the operations of the market.

The Government has implemented the renewable energy feed in Tariff (Refit) strategy. This is to support access to clean, safe reliable and affordable energy for its citizenry.

Government is further increasing investments in ICT infrastructure and human resource development. Further, the Government is undertaking policy, legal and institutional reforms to facilitate universal access to ICT and promote the use of ICT in business (e-Commerce). The Government is also facilitating ICT skills up-scaling for public service workers and the private sector. To ensure sustainable development and utilisation, the Government is accelerating the mainstreaming of ICT in the Zambia education curricula.

With regards to making it easier to do business, the Government has undertaken reforms that made it easier for enterprises to do business. These included abolition of price controls, liberalization of interest rates, abolition of exchange rate controls, 100 percent repatriation of profits, free entry investment in virtually all sectors of the economy, trade reforms aimed at simplifying and harmonizing the tariff structure, and removal of quantitative restrictions on imports. The time taken for business name registration and company incorporation was shortened from 21 days to 3 days. To this effect, the Doing Business Index, improved from 80 in 2009 to 98 in 2016.

Government is promoting the agriculture sector through as one of the Government's priorities to diversify the economy and move it away from its over-reliance on its traditional products and exports, such as copper and cobalt.

To sustain the achievements in the water and sanitation sector, the Government undertook national water reforms and created commercial water and sewerage utility companies in urban and peri-urban areas. The Government also embarked

on a robust rural water supply programme. The commercial water and sewerage utility companies improved the quality of service.

With regards to trade, Government instituted the concept of KAIZEN whose objectives are improving quality, reducing cost and enhancing delivery and total factor productivity.

To reduce delays at border entries as well as the costs associated with travelling to and from the entry point to settle payments, Government introduced the electronic systems to ease cargo transit.