



Republic of Zambia

SPEECH BY
HIS EXCELLENCY MR. EDGAR CHAGWA LUNGU
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA,
DURING THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF
NEELKANTH SAROVAR PREMIERE HOTEL
ON MONDAY, 12TH NOVEMBER, 2018

- **MR SUBHASH MOTIBHAI PATEL, CHAIRPERSON OF NEELKANTH GROUP ZAMBIA;**
- **HON. CHARLES BANDA, MINISTER OF TOURISM AND ARTS;**
- **YOUR WORSHIP THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF LUSAKA;**
- **MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS;**
- **MEMBERS OF THE PRESS;**
- **LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:**

I AM DELIGHTED TO INAUGURATE THE NEELKANTH SAROVAR PREMIERE, LUSAKA, AN ALL-SUITE HOTEL, WHICH IS THE FIRST OF ITS KIND IN THE COUNTRY.

THIS DEVELOPMENT, WHICH WIDENS THE CHOICE TO VISITORS, IS COMMENDABLE. THIS HOTEL IS A MILESTONE IN THE CREATION OF QUALITY ACCOMODATION FOR TOURSITS AND CITIZENS.

THE OPENING OF THIS HOTEL IS A CLEAR EXAMPLE OF PRIVATE SECTOR CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE FULFILMENT OF GOVERNMENT'S TOURISM POLICY, AND IN ACHIEVING OUR VISION **2030**.

AS GOVERNMENT CONTINUES TO CREATE AN ENABLING BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT, IT IS EXPECTED THAT THE PRIVATE SECTOR WILL RISE TO THE CHALLENGE TO CONTRIBUTE FULLY TOWARDS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF OUR NATIONAL OBJECTIVES.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

AS A PEACEFUL, LAND-LINKED COUNTRY, ZAMBIA HAS A WELL ESTABLISHED REPUTATION OF HOSPITABLE AND FRIENDLY PEOPLE, A RARE TRAIT WE MUST ALL UTILIZE TO ADVANCE NEW INVESTMENTS IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY. AS YOU CAN APPRECIATE, THIS INDUSTRY DEPENDS ON PEACE AND STABILITY, A VERY DELICATE COMMODITY WHICH LUCKILY WE HAVE IN ABUNDANCE HERE IN ZAMBIA.

AS PRESIDENT MY PRIMARY JOB IS TO PROTECT LIFE AND PROPERTY AND I THEREFORE APPEAL TO ALL CITIZENS TO ACT RESPONSIBLY AND AVOID RECKLESS STATEMENTS THAT CAN UNDERMINE OUR CHERISHED PEACE AND STABILITY.

THE PRIVATE SECTOR RESPONSE TO OUR FRIENDLY BUSINESS OPERATING ENVIRONMENT IS CLEAR DEFEAT FOR DOOMSAYERS WHO HELL-BENT ON UNDERMINING INVESTOR CONFIDENCE IN OUR ECONOMY.

NO ONE HAS RIGHT TO SINGLE OUT ANY SINGLE NATIONALITY AND SET THE POPULATION AGAINST THEM. INVESTORS FROM DIFFERENT COUNTRIES ARE WELCOME.

HERE WE ARE, INVESTORS FROM TANZANIA HAVE PUT UP THIS WONDERFUL INVESTMENT, WHICH CREATED 200 DIRECT JOBS AND SUPPORTING OTHER SUPPLY CHAINS.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

WE ASPIRE TO BUILD A STRONG AND DYNAMIC INDUSTRIALISED NATION, WHICH PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE WELL-BEING OF ALL OUR PEOPLE.

WE ARE DETERMINED TO IMPROVE ON OUR RESOLVE TO CREATE AN OPERATING BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT THAT EMBODIES VALUES OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC JUSTICE.

AS STIPULATED IN THE SEVENTH NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN, TOURISM IS ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC GROWTH SECTORS, WHICH DIRECTLY AND INDIRECTLY PROVIDES SIGNIFICANT EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES.

THE SECTOR ALSO CONTRIBUTES TO THE ECONOMY AS A FOREIGN EXCHANGE EARNER, BALANCE OF PAYMENTS AND GENERATING REVENUE FOR THE TREASURY.

ZAMBIA HAS TREMENDOUS TOURISM POTENTIAL IN TERMS OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE WHICH IF FULLY EXPLOITED WOULD CONTRIBUTE EVEN MORE TO THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC GROWTH. IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT GOVERNMENT RECLASSIFIED TOURISM FROM A SOCIAL TO AN ECONOMIC SECTOR.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

THE PF GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT THROUGH APPROPRIATE LEGAL AND POLICY MEASURES TO SUPPORT PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENT.

ZAMBIA HAS THE POTENTIAL TO BE TRANSFORMED INTO A TOURISM HUB IN THE REGION AND BEYOND. IT IS IN THIS REGARD, THAT GOVERNMENT HAS PRIORITISED CREATION OF AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT TO SPUR GROWTH IN THE TOURISM SECTOR.

THE SECTOR HAS BEEN STEADILY GROWING. IN 2017, ZAMBIA RECORDED **1, 083, 317** INTERNATIONAL TOURIST ARRIVALS COMPARED TO 2016 WHICH HAD **956,332** INTERNATIONAL TOURIST ARRIVALS REPRESENTING A **13.3** PERCENT INCREASE. IN ADDITION, THE COUNTRY RECORDED SIGNIFICANT SECTOR INVESTMENTS.

THE GROWTH RATE PARTICULARLY IN TERMS OF THE INCREASE IN ARRIVALS TO ZAMBIA CAN PARTLY BE ATTRIBUTED TO THE INCREASE IN BED SPACES. IT IS ENVISAGED THAT, THE NUMBER WILL CONTINUE TO INCREASE ESPECIALLY WITH THE OPENING OF NEELKANTH SAROVAR PREMIERE HOTEL.

IT IS NO DOUBT THAT THE NEELKANTH GROUP HAS BEEN CONTRIBUTING TREMENDOUSLY TO ZAMBIA'S ECONOMY WITH ITS INTEREST IN MINING AND OTHER BUSINESS ACTIVITIES.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

TODAY, I AM PLEASED TO NOTE THAT THE GROUP'S CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE COUNTRY'S SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IS BEING TILTED TOWARDS BOOSTING THE TOURISM SECTOR.

THE TOURISM INDUSTRY IS A SECTOR THAT WE MUST SERIOUSLY NURTURE FOR US TO DERIVE MAXIMUM BENEFITS. THIS IS SO BECAUSE OF ITS SIGNIFICANT POTENTIAL FOR JOB CREATION FOR OUR PEOPLE IN BOTH URBAN AND RURAL AREAS.

I WISH THE NEELKANTH GROUP IN GENERAL AND SAROVAR PREMIERE, LUSAKA IN PARTICULAR, ALL THE BEST IN THIS NEW INVESTMENT.

IT IS NOW MY PLEASURE TO INAUGURATE THIS NEW LANDMARK IN THE HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM INDUSTRY IN THE COUNTRY AS I DECLARE THE HOTEL OFFICIALLY OPENED.

**I THANK YOU AND
GOD BLESS YOU ALL.**