



Republic of Zambia

**SPEECH DELIVERED
BY HIS EXCELLENCY DR. EDGAR CHAGWA LUNGU
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA**

**DURING THE
COMMISSIONING OF THE ULTRA MODERN MILLING
PLANT
BY NATIONAL MILLING CORPORATION
IN LILAYI, LUSAKA DISTRICT**

FRIDAY, 11th OCTOBER 2019

**STATE HOUSE
LUSAKA**

- **THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT, HONOURABLE DAVIES MWILA;**
- **HONOURABLE MICHAEL KATAMBO, MP, MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE;**
- **HONOURABLE BOWMAN LUSAMBO, MP, MINISTER FOR LUSAKA PROVINCE;**
- **OTHER CABINET MINISTERS PRESENT;**
- **SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS PRESENT;**
- **YOUR WORSHIP, THE MAYOR OF THE GREAT CITY OF LUSAKA, MR MILES SAMPA;**
- **YOUR EXCELLENCY, THE UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR TO ZAMBIA, MR DANIEL FOOTE;**
- **MR. RALPH MOSS, VICE-PRESIDENT, SEABOARD CORPORATION;**
- **MR DAVID BOSSE, MANAGING DIRECTOR, NATIONAL MILLING CORPORATION;**
- **MEMBERS OF THE PRESS;**
- **DISITINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:**

I AM GLAD TO OFFICIATE AT THE COMMISSIONING OF THIS ULTRA MODERN MILLING PLANT FOR NATIONAL MILLING CORPORATION.

THIS DEVELOPMENT SIGNIFIES THE IMPORTANCE THAT MY GOVERNMENT ATTACHES TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR TAKING A LEAD IN EFFORTS AIMED AT FOSTERING NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

THIS DEVELOPMENT RESONATES WITH MY GOVERNMENT'S VISION STIPULATED IN THE SEVENTH NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN ANCHORED ON ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION AND JOB CREATION, DRIVEN BY PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENT.

THIS INVESTMENT BY NATIONAL MILLING, AND INDEED OTHER INVESTMENTS TAKING PLACE ACROSS THE COUNTRY IS A CLEAR INDICATION THAT THE PRIVATE SECTOR IS RESPONDING POSITIVELY TO THE CONDUCTIVE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT OBTAINING IN THE NATION.

NATIONAL MILLING CORPORATION REPRESENTS MANY YEARS OF AGRICULTURE AND MILLING DEVELOPMENT IN ZAMBIA, AND THIS NEW PLANT CAPTURES MY GOVERNMENT'S TWENTY FIRST CENTURY VISION FOR INNOVATION.

DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

FOR ZAMBIA TO BECOME A MIDDLE INCOME COUNTRY BY 2030 AND OUR ECONOMY TO FLOURISH, EVERY ZAMBIAN AND CORPORATE CITIZEN MUST PLAY THEIR PART.

IN THAT REGARD, I AM DELIGHTED TO SEE NATIONAL MILLING CORPORATION TAKING AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE NATIONAL ECONOMY BY ADDING VALUE TO THE RAW MATERIALS PRODUCED LOCALLY. VALUE ADDITION AS I HAVE ALWAYS EMPHASISED, WILL STIR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND JOB CREATION.

INFORMATION AVAILED TO ME INDICATES THAT THIS PLANT WILL COMMENCE BY MILLING WHEAT ONLY AND AFTER A PERIOD OF TWELVE MONTHS, WILL START MAIZE PROCESSING.

IT IS GRATIFYING THAT THE CAPACITY OF WHEAT PRODUCTION OF THIS PLANT IS ABOUT SIX HUNDRED METRIC TONNES PER DAY.

WITH THIS CAPACITY, MORE FARMERS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO START GROWING WHEAT. FOR THOSE OF YOU ALREADY GROWING THE CROP, THIS IS A SIGNAL FOR YOU TO EXPAND AND GROW MORE.

DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

WHEAT PRODUCTION HAS BEEN INCREASING OVER THE YEARS AND IN THE **2018/2019** FARMING SEASON, WHEAT WAS ONE OF THE FEW CROPS WHICH RECORDED INCREASED PRODUCTION WHEN COMPARED TO THE PREVIOUS SEASON.

DESPITE THIS IMPROVEMENT IN WHEAT PRODUCTION, WE STILL HAVE NOT REACHED A LEVEL WHERE WE ARE COMFORTABLE TO MEET LOCAL DEMAND.

FOR BUSINESSES SUCH AS BAKERIES TO SURVIVE, WE STILL HAVE TO RELY ON WHEAT IMPORTS. THIS CALLS FOR INCREASED WHEAT PRODUCTION LOCALLY, AND INCREASED LOCAL CAPACITY TO PROCESS, AS THIS MODERN PLANT IS DOING.

THIS IS THE ONLY WAY THAT THE SUPPLY AND PRICE OF WHEAT FLOUR CAN IMPROVE FOR BUSINESSES SUCH AS BAKERIES.

WHEN THIS HAPPENS, THE COUNTRY WILL MANAGE TO RECORD THE SURPLUS WHICH CAN THEN BE EXPORTED AS WHEAT FLOUR TO NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES SUCH AS THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO WHICH HAS AN ENORMOUS DEMAND FOR THE PRODUCT.

DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

WHEAT BEING AN IRRIGATED CROP, OUR FARMERS ARE FACED WITH A NUMBER OF CHALLENGES TO GROW THIS CROP. ONE NOTABLE CHALLENGE IS THE CURRENT POWER DEFICIT AND LOAD SHEDDING WHICH WE ARE CURRENTLY FACING. THIS IS AFFECTING WHEAT YIELDS AND PROFITABILITY.

THIS SCENARIO IS ALSO INHIBITING EARLY MAIZE PRODUCTION. EARLY MAIZE, IS PLANTED IN OCTOBER WITH IRRIGATION, AND IS ARTIFICIALLY DRIED IN APRIL AND MAY FOR THE MARKET.

THE WHEAT AND MAIZE INDUSTRIES CONTRIBUTE SIGNIFICANTLY TO NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY HENCE MY GOVERNMENT TAKES THESE INDUSTRIES SERIOUSLY.

THEREFORE, I WISH TO ASSURE FARMERS THAT GOVERNMENT WILL DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO ADDRESS THE POWER CHALLENGES.

LET ME ALSO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO IMPLORER NATIONAL MILLING AND OTHER INVESTORS IN THE MAIZE AND WHEAT INDUSTRY NOT TO IGNORE CASSAVA.

CASSAVA IS EASY TO GROW AND IS ZAMBIA'S SECOND LARGEST FOOD CROP. THE CROP IS DROUGHT RESISTANT, AND HAS MANY INDUSTRIAL USES. CASSAVA IS AN IMPORTANT CROP WHICH CAN SUPPORT MY GOVERNMENT'S STRATEGY TO UPLIFT THE WELFARE OF OUR SMALL-SCALE FARMERS. MY GOVERNMENT IS NOW EMBARKING ON A PROGRAMME TO COMMERCIALISE THE CASSAVA INDUSTRY IN ZAMBIA.

I AM AWARE THAT ZAMBIAN BREWERIES PLC IS ONE OF THE OFF TAKERS FOR THE CASSAVA GROWN BY OUR SMALLHOLDERS IN THE COUNTRY.

SOME MILLERS ALSO BLEND CASSAVA WITH MAIZE. THIS, I AM INFORMED IS ONE WAY OF MAKING MEALIE MEAL AFFORDABLE TO ORDINARY CONSUMERS.

THEREFORE, I URGE ALL MILLERS TO LOOK INTO POSSIBILITIES OF BLENDING MAIZE AND CASSAVA AS IS THE CASE IN OTHER COUNTRIES.

OUR NEIGHBOURS, THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO HAVE ALREADY MADE A REQUEST FOR US TO EXPORT CASSAVA MEAL TO THAT COUNTRY. THE DRC GUARANTEES A HUGE READY MARKET FOR THIS MARKET AND THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT WE HAVE A YAWNING MARKET LOCALLY AND ABROAD.

DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

I WISH TO COMMEND NATIONAL MILLING FOR THIS HUGE INVESTMENT.

LET ME ASSURE YOU AND OTHER INVESTORS IN THE NATION THAT YOUR INVESTMENTS ARE SAFE.

MY GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO FOSTER DIALOGUE WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO IRON OUT ISSUES AFFECTING YOUR BUSINESS.

OUR THRUST AS GOVERNMENT IS OPEN DIALOGUE TO ENABLE THE FORGING OF JOINT PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR ACTION PLANS. THIS IS IN LINE WITH MY GOVERNMENT'S POLICY TO ENSURE PRIVATE SECTOR DRIVEN DEVELOPMENT.

I, THEREFORE WOULD LIKE TO APPLAUD AND CONGRATULATE SEABOARD CORPORATION, WHO ARE THE OWNERS OF NATIONAL MILLING, FOR ESTABLISHING THIS NEW MILL AND CONTRIBUTING TO FOOD SECURITY IN ZAMBIA.

I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO ENCOURAGE OTHER MILLING COMPANIES TO EMULATE NATIONAL MILLING AND EXPAND OPERATIONS. THIS IS INDEED A BIG INVESTMENT AND I WISH YOU EVERY SUCCESS IN YOUR FUTURE UNDERTAKINGS.

IT IS NOW MY SINGULAR HONOUR AND PRIVILEGE TO COMMISSION THE NATIONAL MILLING CORPORATION ULTRA MODERN PLANT.

THANK YOU AND MAY GOD BLESS YOU ALL.