



Republic of Zambia

SPEECH BY
HIS EXCELLENCY DR. EDGAR CHAGWA LUNGU
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA,
AT THE 114TH ZAMBIA NATIONAL FARMERS UNION
(ZNFU) ANNUAL CONGRESS
AT MULUNGUSHI INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
CENTER IN LUSAKA
ON TUESDAY, 22ND OCTOBER, 2018

- **THE PRESIDENT OF THE ZAMBIA NATIONAL FARMERS' UNION (ZNFU) – MR. JERVIS ZIMBA**
- **ZNFU BOARD AND TRUSTEES;**
- **MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE HON. MICHAEL KATAMBO MP;**
- **MINISTER OF FISHERIES AND LIVESTOCK, HON. KAMPAMBA MULENGA MP;**
- **CABINET MINISTERS PRESENT;**
- **SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS;**
- **COOPERATING PARTNERS;**
- **CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS OF LEADING AGRIBUSINESS COMPANIES;**
- **FARMERS;**
- **DISTINGUISHED GUESTS;**
- **MEMBERS OF THE PRESS;**
- **LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:**
- **FELLOW FARMERS:**

I AM GLAD TO JOIN OUR FARMERS AT THE 114TH ANNUAL CONGRESS. THE GATHERING WHICH IS HELD ANNUALLY HAS BROUGHT TOGETHER FARMERS TO TAKE STOCK OF THE AGRICULTURE PERFORMANCE IN THE PAST SEASON AND TO PLAN FOR THE SEASON AHEAD.

I RECOGNISE THE IMPORTANT ROLE THAT FARMERS PLAY IN EVERY SPHERE OF OUR LIVES.

THEREFORE, IT IS INDEED AN HONOUR FOR ME TO BE HERE AND SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES.

I AM AWARE THAT THE CONGRESS IS AT THE HEIGHT OF ITS ANNUAL ACTIVITIES. THIS YEAR THE UNION MARKS ITS 114TH YEARS OF ITS EXISTENCE UNDER THE THEME, “**HARNESSING AGRICULTURAL INNOVATIONS.**”

CONGRATULATIONS FOR MAKING IT THIS FAR AND I AM CERTAIN THAT THERE ARE MANY PROSPEROUS YEARS AHEAD OF THE ZAMBIA NATIONAL FARMERS UNION.

THIS THEME IS APPROPRIATE AS IT HAS BEEN CRAFTED AT THE TIME WHEN WE ARE TALKING SMART TECHNOLOGIES AND CROP DIVERSIFICATION IN THE FACE OF SEVERE CLIMATIC CONDITIONS WHICH HAVE NEGATIVELY AFFECTED OUR COUNTRY.

THE LAST FARMING SEASON WAS BESET WITH SOME CHALLENGES SUCH AS THE PARTIAL DROUGHT WHICH HIT SOME PARTS OF THE COUNTRY RESULTING IN THESE AREAS YIELDING POOR HARVESTS.

DESPITE THIS SITUATION, I WOULD LIKE TO ASSURE THAT THE COUNTRY STILL HAS ADEQUATE FOOD STOCKS TO FEED OUR PEOPLE. IN THIS REGARD, GOVERNMENT THROUGH THE DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND MITIGATION UNIT UNDER THE OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT HAS ESCALATED ITS REDISTRIBUTION PROGRAMMES OF RELIEF FOOD.

IN ADDITION TO THIS, GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN ENGAGING WITH SOME FARMERS TO GROW MAIZE UNDER PARTIAL IRRIGATION TO FILL THE GAP IN CASE OF FUTURE FOOD DEFICITS.

**DISTINGUISHED GUESTS;
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:**

MY GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO ENSURING THAT THE EARLY MAIZE CROP IS EXPORTED IN THE EVENT THAT IT IS NOT NEEDED FOR LOCAL CONSUMPTION.

AGRICULTURE IS THE COUNTRY'S MAIN ECONOMIC DRIVER WHICH CAN HELP IMPROVE THE LIVES OF OUR PEOPLE. THIS IS WHY OUR SEVENTH NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN IS ANCHORED ON MEASURES WHICH ONCE IMPLEMENTED WILL CONTRIBUTE TO JOB AND WEALTH CREATION.

MY GOVERNMENT REALISES THAT THE VAGARIES OF CLIMATE CHANGE ARE REAL. THIS CALLS FOR US TO TAKE A PARADGM SHIFT BY ENSURING THAT FARMERS ADOPT SMART TECHNOLOGIES AIMED AT MITIGATING CLIMATE CHANGE CHALLENGES AND BOOSTING PRODUCTIVITY.

THEREFORE, INVESTMENTS IN IRRIGATION ARE NO LONGER OPTIONAL BUT A MUST, AND FARMERS DESERVE SUPPORT SUCH AS INCENTIVES IN OUR QUEST TO REALISE THIS GOAL.

MY GOVERNMENT IS AWARE OF THE MANY CHALLENGES WHICH HAVE CONTINUED TO CONFRONT THE FARMING COMMUNITY. THE FARMERS ARE EQUALLY FACED WITH ELECTRICITY SUPPLY DEFICIT WHICH IS CAUSING CONSTANT LOADSHEDDING HENCE DISRUPTING FARMING ACTIVITIES WHICH ARE DRIVEN BY HYDRO POWER.

DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

GOING FORWARD, I DIRECT THE MINISTER OF ENERGY TO EXPEDITE THE IMPORTATION OF ELECTRICITY TO SUPPLEMENT LOCAL POWER SUPPLY TO BOOST SUPPLY NOT ONLY AMONG THE FARMING COMMUNITIES BUT OTHER SECTORS TOO.

GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN MAKING FRANTIC EFFORTS TO DIVERSIFY ENERGY FOR US TO AVOID RELYING ONLY ON HYDRO POWER. ZESCO, THE POWER UTILITY COMPANY, IS ALSO DIRECTED TO COMPLEMENT HYDRO POWER WITH SOLAR POWER BY MID NEXT YEAR SO THAT LOADSHEDDING IS PERMANENTLY CONSIGNED TO HISTORY.

THE ZNFU PRESIDENT:

MY GOVERNMENT IS ENCOURAGED TO HEAR THAT FARMERS ARE MAKING EFFORTS TO DIVERSIFY THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR. VENTURING INTO NEW COMMODITIES IS ONE SURE WAY OF SUSTAINABLE FARMING.

THERE IS URGENT NEED FOR US TO BEGIN TO ACTUALISE OUR PRONOUNCEMENTS NOT ONLY IN THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR BUT OTHER AREAS OF OUR ECONOMY. MY GOVERNMENT WILL REMAIN STEADFAST IN DELIVERING DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRY'S URBAN AND RURAL AREAS.

OUR UNWAVERING COMMITMENT IS CONSPICUOUS IN THE INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAMME WHERE UNPRECEDENTED ROAD DEVELOPMENT HAS BEEN LAID OUT ACROSS THE COUNTRY. WITH A GOOD ROAD NETWORK IN URBAN AND RURAL AREAS, GROWTH IN THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR SHOULD NOW BE SEEN BECAUSE AGRO PRODUCE IS EASILY BEING TRANSPORTED TO RESPECTIVE MARKETS.

LET ME ASSURE OUR LIVESTOCK FARMERS THAT MY GOVERNMENT IS WORKING ROUND THE CLOCK TO ADDRESS ANIMAL DISEASES WHICH HAVE CONTINUED TO REVERSE THE GAINS MADE BY OUR LIVESTOCK FARMING COMMUNITY.

FURTHER, THE RAMPANT STOCK THEFTS THAT LIVESTOCK FARMERS CONTINUE TO FACE IS OF GREAT CONCERN TO MY GOVERNMENT. THE ZAMBIA POLICE WILL BE INSTRUCTED TO ENSURE THAT CULPRITS ARE BROUGHT TO BOOK AND SEVERE PUNISHMENT METED OUT ON PERPETRATORS TO DETER WOULD BE OFFENDERS.

I AM AWARE THAT YOUR RECOMMENDATION TO MAKE STOCK THEFT A NON BAILABLE OFFENCE IS BEING REVIEWED TOGETHER WITH OTHER PIECES OF LEGISLATION BY THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS, ESPECIALLY THAT WHICH IS PROCESSED. OUR OBJECTIVE IS AIMED AT JOB AND WEALTH CREATION AND THIS WILL BOOST THE COUNTRY'S EXPORT EARNINGS.

ZAMBIA IS ENDOWED WITH FERTILE SOILS AND IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT OUR FARMERS WILL GET A RETURN ON THEIR INVESTMENT. I AM GLAD TO NOTE THAT GOVERNMENT HAS JUST SIGNED A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL. THEREFORE, I URGE ALL OF YOU OUR FARMERS TO COME ON BOARD TO PRODUCE TO FEED THE NATION AND THE REGION WHICH HAS BEEN LOOKING TO ZAMBIA FOR SUPPORT IN FOOD PROVISION.

THE ONLY WAY THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR WILL EXPAND PROFITABLY IS THROUGH LARGER MARKETS. THIS IS WHY MY GOVERNMENT ASCRIBED TO THE AFRICA CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA.

WITH THIS DEVELOPMENT, FARMERS SHOULD BEGIN TO DREAM BIG AND PRODUCE BIG FOR THE NEW FOUND LARGE MARKETS.

**ZNFU PRESIDENT;
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:**

THE SEASON LOOKS PROMISING FROM THE FORECASTS BY THE METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT.

MY GOVERNMENT IS DETERMINED TO DIRECT RESOURCES WHERE OUR MOUTH IS, HENCE THE INPUTS HAVE BEEN PUT IN PLACE AND WE ARE WORKING HARD TO ELIMINATE HICCUPS WHICH HAVE BEEN AFFECTING INPUT DISTRIBUTION. PLANTING TIME IS ALREADY AROUND THE CORNER.

I WISH ALL OUR FARMERS SUCCESS IN THEIR FARMING ACTIVITIES. WE LOOK FORWARD TO A PROSPEROUS FARMING SEASON.

IT IS NOW MY SINGULAR HONOUR TO DECLARE THE 114TH ANNUAL CONGRESS OF THE ZAMBIA NATIONAL FARMERS UNION OPEN.

I THANK YOU AND GOD BLESS YOU ALL.