



Republic of Zambia

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY**

**HIS EXCELLENCY DR EDGAR CHAGWA LUNGU,  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA,**

**AT THE COMMISSIONING OF THE REHABILITATED GREAT  
EAST ROAD,**

**WEDNESDAY, 30<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2019**

**STATE HOUSE  
LUSAKA**

- **THE MINISTER OF HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT HON. VINCENT MWALE MP;**
- **THE PROVINCIAL MINISTER FOR EASTERN PROVINCE, HON. MAKEBI ZULU MP;**
- **MEMBERS OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT CENTRAL COMMITTEE;**
- **ALL CABINET MINISTERS PRESENT;**
- **THE EUROPEAN UNION AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA AND COMMON MARKET FOR EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA, YOUR EXCELLENCY JACEK JANKOWSKI;**
- **THE COUNTRY MANAGER OF THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK, MS. MONYAU MARY MANNEKO;**
- **YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESSES PRESENT;**
- **THE BOARD CHAIRMAN OF THE ROAD DEVELOPMENT AGENCY MR SAMUEL MUKUPA;**
- **YOUR WORSHIP THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF CHIPATA, MR. SINOYA MWALE;**
- **CIVIC LEADERS FROM NYIMBA, SINDA, PETAUKE, KATETE AND CHIPATA TOWNS;**
- **ALL HEADS OF GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND PARASTATALS PRESENT;**
- **MEMBERS OF THE PRESS;**
- **DISTINGUISHED GUESTS;**
- **LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:**

I AM EXTREMELY DELIGHTED TO BE IN CHIPATA TODAY, TO COMMISSION THE REHABILITATED GREAT EAST ROAD FROM LUANGWA BRIDGE TO MWAMI BORDER. LET ME THANK THE PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION AND THE PEOPLE OF EASTERN PROVINCE FOR THE WARM WELCOME ACCORDED TO ME AND MY DELEGATION.

THE COMMISSIONING OF THE GREAT EAST ROAD TODAY IS A POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT AS MY GOVERNMENT CONTINUES TO TRANSFORM THE FACE OF OUR COUNTRY.

IT IS A CLEAR REFLECTION OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT GOVERNMENT'S UNWAVERING COMMITMENT TO IMPROVING THE ROAD NETWORK ACROSS THE COUNTRY IN PARTICULAR, AND TO DELIVERING ON OUR DEVELOPMENT PROMISES TO THE ZAMBIAN PEOPLE IN GENERAL.

THIS DEVELOPMENT CAN NOT BE POSSIBLE WITHOUT THE COOPERATION THAT EXISTS BETWEEN MY GOVERNMENT AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY.

THEREFORE, I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO PAY SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO OUR COOPERATING PARTNERS AND CO-FINANCIERS OF THIS PROJECT.

OUR COOPERATING PARTNERS INCLUDE THE EUROPEAN UNION, THROUGH THE EUROPEAN DEVELOPMENT FUND, AND THE EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK, THE FRENCH AGENCY FOR DEVELOPMENT, AND THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK.

TO YOU ALL, I SAY THANK YOU FOR YOUR UNTIRING SUPPORT TO ZAMBIA'S DEVELOPMENT. WE VALUE YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT.

## **LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:**

NATIONAL PROGRAMMES, SUCH AS THE ACCELERATED NATIONAL ROADS CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMME THAT MY GOVERNMENT HAS ADOPTED OVER THE YEARS, CONTINUE TO BEAR FRUIT IN TRANSFORMING THE COUNTRY FROM A LANDLOCKED TO A LAND LINKED COUNTRY. THIS IS OUR VISION.

IT IS THIS COMPELLING VISION WHICH HAS BROUGHT US HERE TODAY TO COMMISSION THE REHABILITATED GREAT EAST ROAD. THIS IS A CRITICAL ROAD NOT ONLY TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF EASTERN PROVINCE BUT ALSO THE COUNTRY AS A WHOLE.

THE PROJECT INVOLVED THE RECONFIGURATION, RESTRUCTURING AND REHABILITATION OF APPROXIMATELY **360** KILOMETRE STRETCH OF THE ROAD WITH FIVE NEW BRIDGES, RUNNING THROUGH ZAMBIA TO THE BORDER WITH MALAWI.

THE GREAT EAST ROAD IS ALSO PART OF THE REGIONAL NACALA CORRIDOR LINKING MALAWI AND ZAMBIA TO THE DEEP-WATER PORT OF NACALA IN MOZAMBIQUE.

THE ROAD IS A MAJOR TRANSPORT LINK BETWEEN ZAMBIA AND MALAWI, AND BETWEEN ZAMBIA AND NORTHERN MOZAMBIQUE. INDEED, IT PLAYS A KEY ROLE IN ZAMBIA'S CORE ROAD NETWORK AND THE REGIONAL TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE.

FURTHER, THE GREAT EAST ROAD IS A MAJOR ROAD THAT FACILITATES TRADE AND INVESTMENT IN EASTERN PROVINCE AND ZAMBIA IN GENERAL. THE ROAD IS AN ALTERNATIVE ROUTE TO THE SEA HENCE CRITICAL TO REGIONAL TRADE.

**YOUR EXCELLENCIES;  
DISTINGUISHED GUESTS;  
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:**

OUR COOPERATING PARTNERS HAVE PROVIDED FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF ABOUT **SIXTY-SEVEN MILLION EUROS** FOR **LOT 1**, **FORTY-THREE MILLION EUROS** FOR **LOT 2** AND **FORTY-THREE MILLION EUROS** FOR **LOT 3**, BRINGING THE TOTAL TO **ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-THREE MILLION EUROS**.

I WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND MY GOVERNMENT'S APPRECIATION TO THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK, WHICH FINANCIALLY SUPPORTED PART OF THE REHABILITATION OF THE GREAT EAST ROAD FROM NYIMBA TO SINDA AT THE COST OF **FIVE HUNDRED AND NINE MILLION KWACHA**.

THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE ROAD PROJECTS CURRENTLY BEING IMPLEMENTED ACROSS THE COUNTRY HAS NOT ONLY TRANSFORMED THE OUTLOOK OF OUR CITIES, BUT HAS EQUALLY IMPROVED CONNECTIVITY AND ACCESSIBILITY.

MY GOVERNMENT WAS PROPELLED TO REHABILITATE THE GREAT EAST ROAD BECAUSE OF ITS HUGE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL BENEFITS TO THE PEOPLE.

THIS PROJECT IS A LIFE CHANGER NOT ONLY TO THE LOCAL PEOPLE BUT THE COUNTRY AS A WHOLE.

FOR INSTANCE, DURING THE PERIOD OF REHABILITATION AND AT ITS PEAK, **2,200** LOCAL PEOPLE WERE EMPLOYED CARRYING OUT BOTH SKILLED AND UNSKILLED WORK. THE LOCAL PEOPLE WERE THUS EMPOWERED IN LINE WITH THE PARTY MANIFESTO WHICH PLACES EMPHASIS ON JOB AND WEALTH CREATION.

IN ADDITION, THE ROAD HAS CONTRIBUTED TO THE EASE OF DOING BUSINESS IN THE COMMUNITIES ALONG AND BEYOND THIS FACILITY.

WITH THIS ROAD, WE HAVE ALSO EXPERIENCED REDUCED TRANSPORT COSTS INCLUDING VEHICLE OPERATING COSTS, REDUCED TRANSIT TIMES FOR BOTH THE TRAVELLING PUBLIC AND CARGO AND INDEED IMPROVED ROAD SAFETY.

OTHER BENEFITS FROM THIS ROAD INCLUDE IMPROVED COMMERCE AND TRADE ALONG THE NACALA CORRIDOR AS WELL AS REDUCED POVERTY AMONG SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES THROUGH JOB AND WEALTH CREATION.

## **LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:**

IT IS GRATIFYING THAT THE DESIGN AND REHABILITATION OF THE TRUNK ROAD INCLUDE SAFETY FEATURES. THIS IS IN LINE WITH THE **2011** TO **2020** UNITED NATIONS DECADE OF ACTION FOR ROAD SAFETY WHICH IDENTIFIED SAFER ROADS AND MOBILITY UNDER PILLAR 2.

THIS ENTAILS THAT APPROPRIATE CONSIDERATION BE GIVEN TO PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES AND OTHER VULNERABLE ROAD USERS, SUCH AS CYCLISTS, IN ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE.

## **LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:**

I HAVE BEEN DISHEARTED, LATELY, BY THE SPIRALLING RATE OF ACCIDENTS ACROSS THE COUNTRY. MY FIRM BELIEF IS THAT ACCIDENTS ONLY HAPPEN DUE TO MECHANICAL AND HUMANS ERROR.

IN THE ACCIDENTS THAT HAPPENED IN RECENT TIMES, I HAVE BEEN INFORMED THAT THEY WERE CAUSED BY HUMAN ERROR. I AM, THEREFORE, DIRECTING THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS TO REVIEW LAWS RELATING TO TRAFFIC OFFENCES TO DETER WOULD-BE OFFENDERS. I AM ALSO DIRECTING THAT PUBLIC TRANSPORT VEHICLES WITHOUT SEAT BELTS FOR ALL PASSENGERS SHOULD BE REMOVED FROM THE ROADS.

I FURTHER URGE THE ROAD TRANSPORT AND SAFETY AGENCY (RTSA) TO ENFORCE THE LAW THAT BANS PEOPLE FROM SITTING AT THE BACK OF TRUCKS AND VANS. I HOPE THESE MEASURES WILL HELP REDUCE THE NUMBER OF FATAL ACCIDENTS.

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:**

THIS PROJECT WE ARE WITNESSING TODAY HAS BEEN EFFECTIVELY IMPLEMENTED BECAUSE OF THE SUPPORT RENDERED BY OUR TRADITIONAL LEADERS. IN THIS REGARD, I WISH TO EXPRESS MY HEARTFELT GRATITUDE TO YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESSES FOR YOUR SUPPORT DURING THE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION.

THE TRADITIONAL LEADERS PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THIS PROJECT BY FACILITATING THE EXTRACTION OF MATERIALS AND REALIGNMENT OF THE ROAD THROUGH THEIR CHIEFDOMS. I URGE ALL OUR TRADITIONAL LEADERS TO CONTINUE SUPPORTING NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

**DISTINGUISHED GUESTS;**

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:**

AS I CONCLUDE, I URGE THE MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT, AND THE ROAD DEVELOPMENT AGENCY TO CONTINUE DEMONSTRATING COMMITMENT AND DUE DILLIGENCE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL ROAD AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS.

GREAT CARE MUST BE EXERCISED ON THIS ROAD WHICH HAS BEEN REHABILITATED AT GREAT COST. THIS CAN BE DONE BY PUTTING IN PLACE A WELL PLANNED MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME. ONCE PROJECTS ARE COMPLETED, THE MAINTENANCE COMPONENT HAS ALWAYS BEEN IGNORED. THIS SHOULD NOT BE SO.



TO ALL THE RESIDENTS LIVING ALONG THE ROAD, ENSURE THAT YOU GUARD THE INFRASTRUCTURE AGAINST VANDALISM. LET US NOT VANDALISE THE ROAD SIGNAGE AND OTHER ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE.

I AM ALSO URGING TRANSPORTERS TO ENSURE THAT THEY CONTRIBUTE TO THE PRESERVATION OF THIS BEAUTIFUL INFRASTRUCTURE BY ADHERING TO ALLOWABLE LOAD LIMITS.

MY GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO PRIORITISE INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT COUNTRYWIDE AS A VEHICLE TO ACCELERATED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

IT IS NOW MY SINGULAR HONOUR AND PRIVILEGE TO DECLARE THE REHABILITATED GREAT EAST ROAD OFFICIALLY COMMMISIONED.

**MAY GOD ALMIGHTY BLESS YOU ALL**