



Press Statement  
For Immediate Release

## **CHURCHES ARE FREE TO DECIDE**

**LUSAKA, (Saturday, 25th April, 2020)**-----State House would like to clarify that **His Excellency, Dr Edgar Chagwa Lungu, President of the Republic of Zambia**, has not directed churches to open.

In his address to the nation Friday, the President said; "I have decided that some activities such as the following may continue being undertaken normally subject to adhering to public health regulations, guidelines and certification: 1) Places of Worship may congregate while observing social distancing, mandatory face masks, hand sanitising, and hand washing..."

This means that the President is not directing churches, rather he is giving those who still want to congregate during this period an option. Those who do not want to do so are free not to go to church.

Therefore, it is misleading to say President Lungu has "directed" as some people are inferring because President Lungu cannot direct anyone to go to church or indeed to open the churches.

He, in the first place, did not close any church but individual churches opted to do so due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Even now, churches are free to open or not to open their places of worship.

Generally, in his speech, the President was giving hope in the midst of despair due to the Coronavirus.

The President also emphasised at the end of the Speech that he will within seven days talk to the nation regarding the decisions he is continually making as he leads the country in these trying times.

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