



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

**ADDRESS TO THE NATION**

**BY**

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

**ON THE**

**EVE OF AFRICA FREEDOM DAY**

**SUNDAY, 24<sup>TH</sup> MAY, 2020**

**STATE HOUSE  
LUSAKA**

## **COUNTRYMEN AND WOMEN,**

1. GOOD EVENING.

2. TOMORROW, 25<sup>TH</sup> MAY, WE IN ZAMBIA AND OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS ACROSS THE AFRICAN CONTINENT WILL COME TOGETHER, IN SPIRIT, TO CELEBRATE OUR FREEDOM. THE FREEDOM WON FOR US BY OUR FOUNDING FATHERS AND MOTHERS THROUGH AN UNWAVERING SENSE OF UBUNTU AND SACRIFICE. THROUGH THEIR SPIRITED STRUGGLE AND SACRIFICE, DIGNITY WAS RESTORED TO THE AFRICAN PEOPLE.

## **COUNTRYMEN AND WOMEN,**

3. THE AFRICA FREEDOM DAY WAS FOUNDED NOT ONLY TO CELEBRATE FREEDOM, BUT ALSO TO PROMOTE UNITY AND SOLIDARITY AMONG AFRICAN STATES. IT IS THE BRAIN CHILD OF OUR AFRICAN LEADERS WHO CONVERGED ON 25<sup>TH</sup> MAY, 1963 TO FORM THE ORGANISATION OF AFRICAN UNITY, NOW THE AFRICAN UNION. THE FORMATION OF THE ORGANISATION OF AFRICAN UNITY WAS IN A BID TO LIBERATE THE REST OF AFRICA FROM COLONIAL RULE.

## **COUNTRYMEN AND WOMEN,**

4. THE RELEVANCE OF AFRICA FREEDOM DAY TO ZAMBIA AND THE REST OF AFRICA CANNOT BE OVER-EMPHASISED. ZAMBIA AND AFRICA NEED TO REINVIGORATE THAT SPIRIT OF AFRICAN UNITY AND SOLIDARITY TO OVERCOME THE MANY CHALLENGES WE FACE TODAY.

ZAMBIA AND AFRICA AS A WHOLE NEED TO EMBRACE THE COURAGE OF OUR FOUNDING FATHERS AND MOTHERS, IF WE ARE TO ACHIEVE THE FUTURE WE WANT AND THE FUTURE WE DESERVE.

ZAMBIA AND AFRICA STILL NEED THE VISION AND THE SPIRIT OF SACRIFICE OF OUR FORERUNNERS, IF WE ARE TO ACHIEVE SOCIO-ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND LASTING PEACE AND FREEDOM ON OUR BELOVED CONTINENT.

### **COUNTRYMEN AND WOMEN,**

**5.** AS WE COMMEMORATE AFRICA FREEDOM DAY, WE REMEMBER ALL THOSE THAT SACRIFICED THEIR LIVES FOR US TO ENJOY THE FREEDOM WE HAVE TODAY. THE JOURNEY TO FREEDOM WAS LONG, THE STRUGGLE WAS FRAUGHT WITH SACRIFICE. SADLY, MOST OF OUR FREEDOM FIGHTERS WENT UNNOTICED BUT SOME FOUND THEIR WAY INTO HISTORY BOOKS AND ARE REMEMBERED TODAY WITH GREAT PRIDE AND HONOUR.

**6.** THE 25<sup>TH</sup> OF MAY BRINGS A SENSE OF PATRIOTISM TO ALL AFRICANS, WHETHER AT HOME OR ABROAD, AND MAKES THE PEOPLE WHO FOUGHT FOR OUR FREEDOM EVEN MORE SPECIAL. WE PAY PROFOUND TRIBUTE TO THEM ALL.

**7.** LET ME PAY SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO DR. KENNETH DAVID KAUNDA, THE FATHER OF OUR NATION WHO, TOGETHER WITH HIS COMPATRIOTS, PLAYED A PIVOTAL ROLE IN THE LIBERATION OF OUR COUNTRY, THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN

REGION AND AFRICA AS A WHOLE. THESE GALLANT MEN AND WOMEN HAVE EARNED A PLACE OF HONOUR BOTH IN OUR COUNTRY AND THE AFRICAN CONTINENT.

**COUNTRYMEN AND WOMEN,**

**8.** THIS YEAR, AFRICA FREEDOM DAY IS BEING COMMEMORATED UNDER THE THEME: **“SILENCING THE GUNS: CREATING CONDUCTIVE CONDITIONS FOR AFRICA’S DEVELOPMENT”**.

**9.** THIS THEME IS TIMELY AND IN LINE WITH THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE CONTINENT AS ENSHRINED IN THE AFRICAN UNION AGENDA 2063. AGENDA 2063 ENVISIONS AN AFRICA WITHOUT WARS. AN AFRICA WITHOUT CIVIL CONFLICTS. AN AFRICA WITHOUT GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE. AGENDA 2063 ALSO ENVISIONS AN AFRICA AT PEACE WITH ITSELF AND AT PEACE WITH THE REST OF THE WORLD.

**COUNTRYMEN AND WOMEN,**

**10.** THE EXISTENCE OF CONFLICTS ON THE CONTINENT HAS RESULTED IN THE FAILURE BY SOME MEMBER STATES TO ACHIEVE LASTING FREEDOM AND MEANINGFUL DEVELOPMENT FOR OUR PEOPLE.

THE ROOT CAUSES OF THESE CONFLICTS ARE MAINLY POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IN NATURE. THESE CONFLICTS CREATE A FERTILE GROUND FOR EXTREMISM, TERRORISM AND OTHER TRANS-NATIONAL CRIMES. IT IS PAINFULLY CLEAR THAT CONFLICTS AND INSTABILITY

PERPETUATE POVERTY AND DISCOURAGE INVESTMENT, THEREBY ROBBING THE AFRICAN CONTINENT AND ITS PEOPLE THE OPPORTUNITY TO REALISE OUR FULL POTENTIAL.

**11.** THE THEME IS, THEREFORE, RELEVANT TO THE CONTINENT AS IT GALVANISES MEMBER STATES TO OVERCOME THESE CONFLICTS AND BUILD A PEACEFUL, STABLE, SECURE AND PROSPEROUS AFRICA.

**12.** THE THEME IS EQUALLY RELEVANT TO OUR COUNTRY AS WE ENDEAVOUR TO CREATE A CONDUCIVE AND PEACEFUL ENVIRONMENT FOR OUR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT WITHOUT LEAVING ANYONE BEHIND. FURTHER, IT INSPIRES US TO SCALE UP OUR ROLE IN PROMOTING PEACE AND STABILITY ON THE CONTINENT. WE WANT PEACE TO REIGN IN OUR COUNTRY AND THE CONTINENT AS A WHOLE.

### **COUNTRYMEN AND WOMEN,**

**13.** INSPIRED BY THE VISION OF OUR FOUNDING FATHERS AND MOTHERS, ZAMBIA HAS CONTINUED TO PARTICIPATE IN VARIOUS CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND PEACE KEEPING INITIATIVES ON THE CONTINENT. OUR PEACE KEEPING MISSIONS HAVE PERFORMED EXCEPTIONALLY WELL AND OUR COUNTRY HAS DRAWN ACCOLADES FROM AROUND THE GLOBE.

**14.** OUR COMMITMENT TO PEACE AND SECURITY CAN ALSO BE SEEN THROUGH THE RATIFICATION OF A NUMBER OF TREATIES AND PROTOCOLS. THESE INCLUDE THE AFRICAN CHARTER ON DEMOCRACY, ELECTIONS AND

GOVERNANCE, THE PROTOCOL RELATING TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL OF THE AFRICAN UNION AS WELL AS THE AFRICAN UNION CONVENTION ON PREVENTING AND COMBATING CORRUPTION, AMONG OTHERS.

**15.** IN OUR 55 YEARS OF EXISTENCE AS A REPUBLIC, WE HAVE ACTIVELY TAKEN PART IN FINDING SOLUTIONS TO AFRICA'S PROBLEMS. ZAMBIA WAS AT THE FOREFRONT OF THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. WE WERE INSTRUMENTAL IN FINDING PEACE DURING THE CIVIL WARS IN MOZAMBIQUE AND ANGOLA. IN THE RECENT PAST, ZAMBIA HAS BEEN A MEMBER OF THE AFRICAN UNION PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL AND CONTINUES TO BE A MEMBER OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE GREAT LAKES REGION.

**16.** IN ADDITION, THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY ENTRUSTED ZAMBIA TO CHAIR THE ORGAN ON POLITICS, DEFENCE, AND SECURITY COOPERATION, A RESPONSIBILITY WHICH WE WHOLEHEARTEDLY AND DILIGENTLY EXECUTED.

IT IS WORTH MENTIONING THAT DURING OUR TENURE AT THE HELM OF THIS ORGAN, ZAMBIA OVERSAW THE CONDUCT OF PEACEFUL ELECTIONS IN SIX SOUTHERN AFRICAN COUNTRIES INCLUDING, NOTABLY, IN THE DEMOCRATIC

REPUBLIC OF CONGO, A LANDMARK ELECTION THAT USHERED IN A NEW ERA FOR OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN THAT COUNTRY.

**17.** FURTHER, AS A COUNTRY, WE HAVE BEEN IMPLEMENTING AN ARMS AMNESTY INITIATIVE SINCE 2011 WHICH IS ALSO IN LINE WITH THE AFRICAN UNION INITIATIVE TO SILENCE THE GUNS BY 2020. LET ME, THEREFORE, URGE ALL THOSE STILL IN POSSESSION OF ILLEGAL FIREARMS TO SURRENDER THEM TO THE STATE. IN DOING SO, YOU WILL BE CONTRIBUTING TO THE ERADICATION OF THE GUN CULTURE, THEREBY PROMOTING PEACE IN OUR COUNTRY. ONCE THIS AMNESTY ENDS, ANYONE FOUND IN POSSESSION OF ILLEGAL FIREARMS WILL BE STERNLY DEALT WITH UNDER OUR EXISTING LAWS.

**COUNTRYMEN AND WOMEN,**

**18.** ZAMBIA REMAINS COMMITTED TO CONTRIBUTING TOWARDS BUILDING A BETTER AFRICA, THE AFRICA WE WANT. TO THIS END, WE WILL CONTINUE TO TAKE A PROACTIVE ROLE AND RE-ASSERT OUR POSITION IN REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL BODIES. WE HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

**19.** WHILE ZAMBIA HAS CONTINUED TO ENJOY PEACE, WE STILL NEED TO CHECK CERTAIN VICES WHICH UNDERMINE OUR CAPACITY TO SAFEGUARD PEACE AND ACHIEVE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

**20.** IN THIS RESPECT, WE MUST GUARD AGAINST TRIBALISM, EXTREMISM, CORRUPTION, CHILD MARRIAGES AND VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS. WE MUST ALSO GUARD AGAINST EMERGING THREATS SUCH AS TERRORISM, CYBER-CRIMES, MONEY LAUNDERING AND ILLICIT FINANCIAL FLOWS. THESE AND OTHER VICES CAN SABOTAGE OUR EFFORTS TO BUILD A STRONG AND RESILIENT ECONOMY.

**COUNTRYMEN AND WOMEN,**

**21.** THE EMERGENCE OF THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC HAS ALSO POSED A SERIOUS THREAT TO OUR FREEDOM AND DEVELOPMENT. THIS HAS COMPELLED GOVERNMENT TO IMPLEMENT MEASURES TO CONTAIN THE SPREAD OF THE VIRUS.

GOVERNMENT IS AWARE THAT SOME OF THESE MEASURES ARE NOT ONLY LIMITING THE FREEDOMS OF OUR PEOPLE BUT ALSO HURTING THEM AND THE ECONOMY.

HOWEVER, IT IS NECESSARY THAT WE ALL ADHERE TO THESE MEASURES FOR THE SAKE OF PROTECTING THE LIVES OF OUR PEOPLE AND PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF THE DISEASE.

**22.** I COMMEND ALL THOSE IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR, CIVIL SOCIETY AND FAITH-BASED ORGANISATIONS AS WELL AS OUR COOPERATING PARTNERS, FOR JOINING GOVERNMENT IN FIGHTING THIS DISEASE THROUGH VARIOUS TYPES OF SUPPORT.



**23.** SPECIAL COMMENDATION GOES TO ALL OUR FRONTLINE STAFF WHO ARE PUTTING THEIR LIVES AT RISK OF INFECTION IN THIS FIGHT. AS GOVERNMENT, WE WILL DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO ENSURE THAT THEY ARE SAFE AS THEY CARRY OUT THEIR DUTIES. IF WE ALL PUT OUR EFFORTS TOGETHER, WE CAN WIN THE FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19.

**COUNTRYMEN AND WOMEN,**

**24.** OUR COUNTRY AND THE AFRICAN CONTINENT AT LARGE ARE ALSO THREATENED BY ACTS OF NATURE SUCH AS FLOODS, DROUGHTS AND OUTBREAKS OF PESTS AND LIVESTOCK DISEASES. GOVERNMENT REMAINS COMMITTED TO MITIGATING THE EFFECTS OF THESE CALAMITIES IN THE MOST PRACTICAL MANNER. WITH THE SUPPORT OF ALL STAKEHOLDERS, WE WILL CONQUER AND DELIVER A BETTER ZAMBIA FOR ALL.

**25.** WE WILL NEITHER RELENT NOR FALTER IN ADDRESSING THE ROOT CAUSES OF CONFLICT AND ITS OFFSHOOTS OF POVERTY AND SOCIAL DISPARITIES. WE WILL DO EVERYTHING WITHIN OUR POWER TO DEEPEN AND SECURE THE FREEDOMS OF OUR PEOPLE AND THE PEACE THEY CHERISH TO IMPROVE THEIR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC WELLBEING.

**COUNTRYMEN AND WOMEN,**

**26.** MY CLARION CALL GOES TO ALL OF US TO MAKE A DELIBERATE EFFORT TO ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN OUR DEVELOPMENT PROCESS AND TO JEALOUSLY GUARD THE

PEACE THAT OUR COUNTRY HAS CONTINUED TO ENJOY. WE MUST SAFEGUARD OURSELVES FROM ALL FORMS OF CONFLICTS AND INSTABILITY THAT MIGHT ERODE THE ACHIEVEMENTS WE HAVE MADE THUS FAR.

**27.** WE WILL DO WELL TO HEED THE COUNSEL OF SAINT JOHN PAUL THE SECOND WHO ONCE SAID AND I QUOTE

***“LET US NOT ACCEPT VIOLENCE AS THE WAY OF PEACE. LET US INSTEAD BEGIN BY RESPECTING TRUE FREEDOM: THE RESULTING PEACE WILL BE ABLE TO SATISFY THE WORLD’S EXPECTATIONS, FOR IT WILL BE A PEACE BUILT ON JUSTICE, A PEACE FOUNDED ON THE INCOMPARABLE DIGNITY OF THE FREE HUMAN BEING”, END OF QUOTE.***

**28.** PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE MUST, THEREFORE, BE PROMOTED AMONG OUR PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY THE YOUTH, WHO OF LATE HAVE, REGRETTABLY, BEEN USED AS TOOLS OF VIOLENCE. LET US ENHANCE THE USE OF DIALOGUE IN CONFLICT PREVENTION AND RESOLUTION.

**COUNTRYMEN AND WOMEN,**

**29.** LET ME REMIND OUR CITIZENS, ESPECIALLY THE YOUNGER GENERATION, OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF AFRICA FREEDOM DAY. THIS DAY IS A DELIBERATE AND CONSTANT REMINDER THAT THE FREEDOM WE ENJOY TODAY WAS

BORNE OUT OF GREAT SACRIFICES MADE BY OUR FOREFATHERS AND MOTHERS. THIS FREEDOM SHOULD, THEREFORE, NEVER BE TAKEN FOR GRANTED.

**30.** FREEDOM IS THE GREATEST GIFT TO US BY OUR FOREFATHERS AND MOTHERS. PEACE IS OUR GREATEST INHERITANCE. FUTURE GENERATIONS EXPECT NOTHING LESS FROM OUR GENERATION. WE HAVE THE DUTY TO BUILD NECESSARY CAPACITIES TO SECURE AND EXPAND THIS FREEDOM FOR POSTERITY.

**31.** AS WE COMMEMORATE AFRICA FREEDOM DAY, I WANT TO REITERATE GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO PROMOTING PEACE AND STABILITY IN OUR COUNTRY, THE REGION AND ON THE AFRICAN CONTINENT. WE WANT TO SEE A CONFLICT-FREE CONTINENT. WE WANT TO SEE A CONFLICT-FREE REGION. INDEED, WE WANT TO SEE A UNITED AND CONFLICT-FREE ZAMBIA. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE LIVE BY OUR MOTTO OF "**ONE ZAMBIA, ONE NATION**".

### **COUNTRYMEN AND WOMEN,**

**32.** MAY FREEDOM, PEACE AND GOOD HEALTH PREVAIL THROUGHOUT OUR LAND AND THE ENTIRE AFRICAN CONTINENT. LET US ALL JOIN THE EFFORT TO BUILD THE AFRICA OF TODAY AND TOMORROW. WE HAVE THE POWER AND GOD'S FAVOUR TO MAKE IT HAPPEN.

**33.** AS THE SCRIPTURE SAYS IN PHILIPPIANS CHAPTER 4 VERSE 13, WE CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST WHO GIVES US STRENGTH.

**34.** I WISH YOU ALL A PEACEFUL, SAFE AND HEALTHY AFRICA FREEDOM DAY. LET US CONTINUE TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF THE CORONAVIRUS BY IMPLEMENTING THE MEASURES GOVERNMENT HAS PUT IN PLACE.

**35.** LONG LIVE AFRICA, LONG LIVE ZAMBIA.

**36.** MAY GOD BLESS US ALL.

**37.** I THANK YOU.

**38.** GOOD NIGHT.