



**Republic of Zambia**

**SPEECH BY  
HIS EXCELLENCY MR. EDGAR CHAGWA LUNGU  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA,  
AT THE LAUNCH OF THE 2018/2019 PLANTING SEASON  
IN MWINILUNGA, NORTH WESTERN PROVINCE  
THURSDAY, 15<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2018**

**STATE HOUSE**

- **MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, HON. MICHAEL KATAMBO, MP;**
- **MINISTER OF FISHERIES AND LIVESTOCK, HON. KAMPAMBA MULENGA, MP;**
- **YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESSES PRESENT;**
- **PRESIDENT OF THE ZAMBIA NATIONAL FARMERS UNION, MR JERVIS ZIMBA;**
- **FELLOW FARMERS;**
- **MEMBERS OF THE PRESS;**
- **DISTINGUISHED GUESTS;**
- **LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:**

I WISH TO THANK THE PEOPLE OF NORTH WESTERN PROVINCE FOR WELCOMING ME AND TURNING UP TO WITNESS THE LAUNCH OF THE 2018/2019 PLANTING SEASON HERE IN MWINILUNGA DISTRICT.

IT IS INDEED GRATIFYING TO COME TO NORTH WESTERN PROVINCE KNOWING THAT THIS IS ONE OF THE PROVINCES IN OUR COUNTRY WHICH HAS A HUGE POTENTIAL FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION.

AS GOVERNMENT, WE ARE KEEN TO ACCELERATE AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRY AND PARTICULARLY NORTH WESTERN PROVINCE AS THIS IS ONE OF OUR ECONOMY'S PRIORITY SECTOR.

TO PROPEL THIS SECTOR, WE HAVE PUT IN PLACE FAVOURABLE POLICIES AND ARE IMPLEMENTING VARIOUS PROGRAMMES ACROSS ITS SUB-SECTORS AMONG THEM CROPS, LIVESTOCK AND FISHERIES.

HOWEVER, THE PERFORMANCE OF THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR IS ALSO DEPENDANT ON A NUMBER OF FACTORS SOME OF WHICH ARE NATURAL OCCURENCES SUCH AS THE CHANGING CLIMATIC CONDITIONS AS WAS THE CASE DURING THE 2017/2018 AGRICULTURAL SEASON.

THE SITUATION DURING THIS AGRICULTURAL SEASON RESULTED IN SOME PARTS OF THE COUNTRY, ESPECIALLY THE SOUTHERN HALF RECEIVING ERRATIC RAINS THEREBY NEGATIVELY AFFECTING AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION.

CLIMATE CHANGE IS A PHENOMENON WHICH WE WILL CONTINUE TO GRAPPLE WITH. HOWEVER, REGARDLESS OF ITS UNFAVOURABLE EFFECTS, GOVERNMENT IS WORKING TIRELESSLY TO ENSURE THAT FARMERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO PRACTICE AND ADOPT GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES. SOME OF THE PRACTICES INCLUDE CONSERVATION FARMING METHODS AND AGRO FORESTRY.

## **LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:**

OUR COUNTRY IS FORTUNATE AS IT HAS THREE AGRO ECOLOGICAL REGIONS WITH LOW, MEDIUM AND HIGH RAINFALL PATTERNS.

CURRENTLY, THE RAINFALL PATTERN IN OUR COUNTRY HAS SHIFTED TOWARDS THE NORTHERN PARTS OF THE COUNTRY. THIS HAS BEEN SHOWN BY THE RECENT HIGH CROP PRODUCTION FIGURES IN NORTHERN, MUCHINGA AND LUAPULA PROVINCES. THE CROP PURCHASES BY THE FOOD RESERVE AGENCY FROM THE NORTHERN HALF OF ZAMBIA ALSO ATTEST TO THIS DEVELOPMENT.

NORTH WESTERN PROVINCE IS WITHIN THE HIGH RAINFALL ZONE WITH AN AVERAGE RAIN OF **1, 200** MILIMETRES ANNUALLY. THIS PROVINCE IS ALSO ENDOWED WITH VAST FERTILE LAND SUITABLE FOR THE PRODUCTION OF A WIDE RANGE OF CROPS.

I THEREFORE, URGE THE PEOPLE OF NORTH WESTERN PROVINCE TO UTILISE THE GOOD NATURAL RESOURCES AND FAVOURABLE RAINFALL PATTERN TO INCREASE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION.

LET ME ALSO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO CALL UPON OUR TRADITIONAL LEADERS TO EMBRACE BOTH LOCAL AND FOREIGN INVESTORS WHO MAY BE INTERESTED IN INVESTING IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION. THIS WILL STEER THE PROVINCE TO ANOTHER LEVEL IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION.

## **LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:**

I AM CONFIDENT THAT NORTH WESTERN PROVINCE IS POISED TO BE THE NEW COPPERBELT OF ZAMBIA WITH THE MASSIVE NEW MINING INVESTMENTS IN LUMWANA AND KALUMBILA.

WITH SUCH INVESTMENTS, MORE PEOPLE WILL BE ATTRACTED TO THIS PROVINCE IN SEARCH OF EMPLOYMENT AND OTHER BUSINESS ACTIVITIES, AS IS THE CASE NOW. THIS ENTAILS THAT THERE WILL BE INCREASED DEMAND FOR FOOD IN THE REGION. THEREFORE, IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING THAT THE PROVINCE MUST TAKE UP THIS CHALLENGE.

I THEREFORE, CALL UPON THE PEOPLE OF NORTH WESTERN PROVINCE TO GROW SUFFICIENT FOOD TO MEET THE GROWING DEMAND NOT ONLY IN THE PROVINCE, BUT ALSO NEIGHBOURING ANGOLA AND THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC).

THE CLIMATIC CONDITIONS FOR NORTH WESTERN PROVINCE IS APPROPRIATE FOR THE PRODUCTION OF A WIDE RANGE OF CROPS SUCH AS BEANS, SOYABEANS, SWEET POTATOES AND IRISH POTATOES AS EARLIER ALLUDED TO.

## **LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:**

TURNING TO MWINILUNGA, WE ARE ALL AWARE THAT THE DISTRICT IS WELL KNOWN FOR PINEAPPLE PRODUCTION. THEREFORE, IN THE SPIRIT OF DIVERSIFICATION, I WISH TO IMPLORE OUR FARMERS TO SCALE UP PRODUCTION OF PINEAPPLES AND OTHER CROPS WHICH ARE WIDELY GROWN IN VARIOUS PARTS OF NORTH WESTERN PROVINCE.

THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THERE IS ALREADY A YAWNING MARKET FOR A WIDE RANGE OF FOOD CROPS ON THE DOMESTIC AND REGIONAL MARKETS. WE MUST LEVERAGE THIS OPPORTUNITY.

AS GOVERNMENT, WE WILL CONTINUE TO FACILITATE THE GROWTH OF THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR BY DEVISING CONDUCTIVE POLICIES AIMED AT PROMOTING INVESTMENT AND INCREASED PRODUCTION AND VALUE ADDITION.

TO ACHIEVE A FLOURISHING AGRICULTURAL SECTOR, GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO PUTTING IN PLACE INFRASTRUCTURE SUCH AS FEEDER ROADS, IRRIGATION FACILITIES AND STORAGE SHEDS.

IN THAT REGARD, I WISH TO NOTE THAT RECENTLY, THE FOOD RESERVE AGENCY CONSTRUCTED STORAGE FACILITIES IN ZAMBEZI AND MWINILUNGA DISTRICTS WITH STORAGE CAPACITY OF **6,000** METRIC TONNES AND **5,000** METRIC TONNES RESPECTIVELY.

## **LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:**

THE 2018/2019 AGRICULTURAL SEASON HAS ALREADY COMMENCED AND HENCE THE LAUNCH OF THE PLANTING SEASON WE ARE GATHERED HERE FOR TODAY. IN THIS REGARD, I EXPECT RESPECTIVE INSTITUTIONS TO ENSURE A SPEEDY DELIVERY OF VARIOUS FARMING INPUTS TO ENABLE OUR FARMERS START PRODUCTION TIMELY.

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT INPUTS ARE BROUGHT CLOSER TO FARMERS TO AVOID THEM FROM INCURRING HIGH TRANSPORT COSTS. PLEASE BEAR IN MIND THAT A GOOD START OF THE PLANTING SEASON WILL CONTRIBUTE TO A GOOD HARVEST.

HAVING SAID THAT, IT IS NOW MY SINGULAR HONOUR AND PRIVILEGE TO OFFICIALLY LAUNCH THE 2017/2018 PLANTING SEASON.

LET US ALL LOOK FORWARD TO A VERY GOOD AGRICULTURAL SEASON.

**I THANKYOU AND MAY GOD BLESS.**