



Republic of Zambia

**SPEECH BY  
HIS EXCELLENCY MR EDGAR CHAGWA LUNGU  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA  
AT THE HANDOVER CEREMONY ON THE COMPLETION OF  
CONSTRUCTION OF MWOMBOSHI DAM IN CHISAMBA  
DISTRICT, CENTRAL PROVINCE  
ON THURSDAY, 6<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 2018**

- **HON. MICHAEL KATAMBO, MP, MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE;**
- **HON. SYDNEY MUSHANGA, MP;**
- **SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS;**
- **YOUR EXCELLENCY MR LI JIE, CHINESE AMBASSADOR TO ZAMBIA & CHAIRMAN FOR ANHUI FOREIGN ECONOMIC CONSTRUCTION COMPANY (AFECC);**
- **YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESSES PRESNT;**
- **FELLOW FARMERS;**
- **MEMBERS OF THE PRESS;**
- **DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:**

FROM THE ONSET, I WISH TO EXPRESS MY UTMOST SINCERE CONGRATULATIONS TO ANHUI FOREIGN ECONOMIC CONSTRUCTION COMPANY LIMITED (AFECC) ON BEHALF OF THE ENTIRE FARMING COMMUNITY HERE IN CHISAMBA OF CENTRAL PROVINCE, AND INDEED ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA, FOR THIS LANDMARK ACHIEVEMENT OF THE LARGEST DAM EVER BUILT FOR IRRIGATION IN ZAMBIA.

I AM AWARE THAT THE CONSTRUCTION OF MWOMBOSHI DAM IS AN ENGINEERING FEAT WHICH AFECC HAS SUCCESSFULLY ATTAINED IN RECORD TIME OF TWENTY TWO MONTHS, EIGHT MONTHS AHEAD OF THE SCHEDULED CONTRACT PERIOD OF 30 MONTHS.

THEREFORE, I AM DELIGHTED TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH THIS REMARKABLE PROJECT WHICH IS IN FULFILMENT OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT (PF) MANIFESTO ON INCREASING MANAGEMENT AND UTILISATION OF WATER RESOURCES FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT.

THIS WILL BE ACHIEVED BY AMONG OTHER THINGS; CONSTRUCTING AT LEAST ONE LARGE SCALE DAM PER PROVINCE SUCH AS MWOMBOSHI, TO IRRIGATE MASSIVE HECTARES, ESTABLISHING IRRIGATION SCHEMES, FACILITATING PRIVATE INVESTMENT IN DAMS AND IRRIGATION INFRASTRUCTURE AMONG SEVERAL OTHER ACTIONS.

THIS PROJECT IS ALSO A DEMONSTRATION OF OUR COUNTRY TURNING A NEW PAGE IN THE ADVANCEMENT OF IRRIGATED AGRICULTURE IN ZAMBIA. THE PROJECT IS A **STAMP** ON THE PF GOVERNMENT'S SIGNIFICANT STRIDES BEING MADE IN INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AIMED AT FOSTERING NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

THIS IS A CONSPICUOUS AND ULTRA MODERN EXAMPLE OF THE MANY PROJECTS THAT WE HAVE CONTINUED TO ROLL OUT UNDER OUR ROBUST INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME ACROSS THE COUNTRY. MWOMBOSHI DAM IS A GAME CHANGER NOT ONLY IN THE COUNTRY'S AGRICULTURE SECTOR, AND IRRIGATED, BUT ALSO IN PARTICULAR CENTRAL PROVINCE. THE DAM HAS GIVEN AN UNPRECEDENTED TRANSFORMATION TO THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR, A SIGN THAT WE ARE HEADED FOR BETTER PROSPECTS IN AGRICULTURE.

## **LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:**

AS GOVERNMENT, WE ENVISAGE TO ROLL OUT BULK WATER IRRIGATION INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS OF THIS KIND ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

THIS ACHIEVEMENT IS A SERIOUS CHALLENGE AND A WAKE UP CALL TO ALL CONTRACTORS IN ALL SECTORS OF OUR ECONOMY, WHO HAVE A TENDENCY OF ABANDONING WORKS AND FAILURE TO FINISH PROJECTS WITHIN THE STIPULATED CONTRACT TIME FRAME. THIS UNCALLED FOR AND RETROGRESSIVE PRACTICE IS PREVALENT IN MOST OF THE PROJECTS ACROSS THE COUNTRY AND IT IS COSTLY FOR US IN OUR QUEST TO FOSTER NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

LET ME TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO CHALLENGE ALL CONTRACTORS TO EMULATE THE WORK CULTURE AND DEDICATION WHICH AFECC HAS EXHIBITED HERE BY NOT JUST COMPLETING CONSTRUCTION WORKS AHEAD OF SCHEDULE, BUT ALSO BY CONSTRUCTING THE DAM WITH UNEQUALLED WORLD CLASS STANDARDS OF QUALITY AND EFFICIENCY.

IT IS GRATIFYING TO NOTE THAT, AT A COST OF **28** MILLION UNITED STATES DOLLARS, THE SIXTY ONE (61) MILLION CUBIC METRES WATER STORAGE CAPACITY MWOMBOSHI DAM AND RESEVOIR WILL PROVIDE IRRIGATION WATER FOR FARMERS.

THE FARMERS COMPRISING SMALLHOLDERS AND EMERGENT FARMERS NORTH OF THE DAM, AS WELL AS LARGE SCALE COMMERCIAL FARMERS HAVE SUBSCRIBED TO PAYING FOR IRRIGATION WATER FROM THE FACILITY TO ENSURE ITS LONG TERM SUSTAINABILITY AND VIABILITY.

## **LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:**

I AM ALSO HAPPY TO NOTE THAT **4,000** HECTARES OF LAND WILL BE BROUGHT UNDER IRRIGATION WITH AT LEAST 1, 500 HECTARES UNDER SMALLHOLDER FARMERS.

WHILE WE CELEBRATE THE COMPLETION AND HANDING OVER OF THIS WONDERFUL DAM AND RESERVOIR, I WISH TO NOTE THAT THE MWOMBOSHI SCHEME WHICH IS SUPPOSED TO BE TAKING WATER TO THE FARMSTEADS HAS NOT YET BEEN DONE.

I THEREFORE, CALL UPON THE MINISTRIES OF AGRICULTURE AND FINANCE TO ENSURE THAT FUNDS ARE SOURCED TO SPEEDILY COMPLETE THE SCHEME. FAILURE TO COMPLETE THIS SCHEME WOULD RENDER THE DAM PROJECT IRRELEVANT.

WE ARE IN A HURRY TO BRING ABOUT LONG-TERM SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACROSS OUR COUNTRY. AS GOVERNMENT, WE ARE PURSUING A NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENDA WHICH SEEKS TO PROMOTE AGRICULTURE, THE SECTOR WITH A COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE FOR OUR COUNTRY.

OUR COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE LIES IN THE COUNTRY'S ABUNDANT SURFACE, UNDERGROUND WATER AND LAND WHICH PLAYS A MAJOR ROLE IN STIRRING ECONOMIC GROWTH, EMPLOYMENT CREATION AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION.

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:**

WITH THIS ENDOWMENT, OUR COUNTRY HAS THE POTENTIAL TO IRRIGATE ABOUT THREE MILLION HECTARES OF LAND.

DESPITE THE ABUNDANT WATER RESOURCE THAT OUR COUNTRY IS ENDOWED WITH, IT IS HEARTBREAKING TO NOTE THAT **28** PERCENT OF THE AVAILABLE WATER RESOURCES IS HARNESSSED FOR HYDRO POWER GENERATION AND ONLY **2** PERCENT IS FOR IRRIGATION WHILE **70** PERCENT REMAINS UNTAPPED.

I AM INFORMED THAT FOUR (**4**) SEPARATE PIPELINE SUB-PROJECT SITES WITH HIGH POTENTIAL FOR IRRIGATION DEVELOPMENT AND INVESTMENT HAVE ALREADY BEEN IDENTIFIED AND EARMARKED FOR **DEVELOPMENT**.

GOVERNMENT'S TARGET IS TO ROLL OUT THE IRRIGATION INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AND INVESTMENT TO BOOST HARNESSING OF OUR COUNTRY'S POTENTIAL FOR IMMENSE SURFACE WATER FROM THE CURRENT PALTRY **2** PERCENT TO **20** PERCENT BY **2030**. THROUGH THIS DEVELOPMENT, IT IS EXPECTED THAT OUR VISION OF OUR COUNTRY BEING TRANSFORMED INTO A MIDDLE INCOME COUNTRY WILL MATERIALISE.

## **LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:**

I WISH TO EXPRESS MY PROFOUND DELIGHT THAT THIS PROJECT HAS ALREADY STARTED BEARING FRUIT. THIS IS EVIDENT IN THE **230** HOUSING UNITS WITH BOREHOLES FOR DOMESTIC WATER SUPPLY BUILT FOR AFFECTED MWOMBOSHI HOUSEHOLDS, WHO WERE DISPLACED TO PAVE WAY FOR THIS DEVELOPMENT.

OTHER AUXILIARY DEVELOPMENTS INCLUDE ACCESS ROADS WHICH HAVE BEEN CONSTRUCTED WHILE ELECTRICITY POWER SUPPLY HAS BEEN PROVIDED TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY HERE IN MWOMBOSHI TRANSFORMING THE OUTLOOK OF CHISAMBA DISTRICT FOR THE BETTER.

THIS IS THE PF GOVERNMENT'S PREOCCUPATION; TO TRANSFORM THE COUNTRY'S RURAL FARMING COMMUNITIES AND ULTIMATELY IMPROVING THEIR LIVELIHOODS THROUGH AGRICULTURE.

## **LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:**

LET ME NOW TURN TO THE TOPICAL ISSUE OF CLIMATE CHANGE ASSOCIATED WITH ERRATIC REINFALL PATTERNS AND DROUGHTS WHICH WE HAVE CONTINUED TO EXPERIENCE. I WISH TO REITERATE THAT THIS PHENOMENON IS REAL HENCE THE NEED FOR US TO BE EQUIPPED AT ALL TIMES TO DEAL WITH IT.

IT IS GRATIFYING THAT THE CONSTRUCTION OF MWOMBOSHI DAM AND SIMILAR BULK-WATER IRRIGATION INFRASTRUCTURE, WHICH GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO PUT UP IN SITES ALREADY IDENTIFIED, WILL ENHANCE THE CAPACITY AND RESILIENCE OF OUR FARMING COMMUNITIES TO CUSHION THE VAGARIES OF CLIMATE. ABOVE ALL, THIS WILL SIGNIFICANTLY CONTRIBUTE TO HOUSEHOLD AND NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY.

I WISH TO NOW NOTE THAT MWOMBOSHI DAM AND THE RESERVOIR HAS BEEN CONSTRUCTED AT THE EXPENSE OF THE ZAMBIAN TAX PAYERS THROUGH A LOAN CONTRACTED FROM THE WORLD BANK INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION (IDA). MY APPEAL TO THE COMMUNITY OF MWOMBOSHI IS FOR THEM TO SAFEGUARD THIS FACILITY AS A NATIONAL ASSET FOR OUR BENEFIT TODAY AND POSTERITY.



I AM EQUALLY INFORMED THAT THERE IS AN ACTIVE QUARRY WITHIN THE VICINITY OF THE DAM. IN THIS REGARD, LET ME CAUTION ALL STAKEHOLDERS IN PARTICULAR, THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND MINERALS DEVELOPMENT, THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND THE ZAMBIA ENVIRONMENTAL AND MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY (ZEMA) TO ENSURE THAT LONG TERM AND PERMANENT PREVENTIVE MEASURES ARE DEvised.

THIS WILL HELP AVOID A POTENTIAL RISK OF COMPROMISING THE SAFETY AND STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY OF THE DAM FROM CONTINUED QUARRYING ACTIVITIES NEAR THIS STRUCTURE AND RESERVOIR. THIS IS A NATIONAL ASSET WHICH MUST BE PROTECTED AND GUARDED JEALOUSLY.

IN MY CONCLUSION, I WISH TO ONCE AGAIN COMMEND AF ECC AND THE WORKERS FOR THEIR DEDICATED WORK ON THIS PROJECT. I ALSO EXTEND MY SINCERE GRATITUDE TO THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND INDEED YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS CHIEF LITETA FOR ACCEPTING TO HAVE THE DAM ERECTED IN THE AREA. LAST BUT NOT THE LEAST, I THANK THE WORLD BANK FOR FINANCING THE LOAN TOWARDS THIS PROJECT. **I THANK YOU ALL AND GOD BLESS THIS AREA WITH PROSPERITY.**

