



# REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA



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## STATEMENT

BY

**THE HONOURABLE LUCKY MULUSA, M.P.,  
MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING,**

**ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF THE LANDLOCKED  
DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (LLDCS)**

**DURING**

**THE 2017 PLENARY SESSION OF THE HLPF.**

New York  
17<sup>th</sup> July 2017

**Mr President,  
Ministers Present,  
Excellences,  
Distinguished delegates,**

On behalf of the Land Locked Developing Countries (LLDCS) and indeed my own behalf, I wish to congratulate the ECOSOC President for convening the 2017 Session of the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) under the theme ***“Eradicating Poverty and Promoting Prosperity in a changing World”***. This theme encapsulates an overarching goal of all the Sustainable Development Goals and the entire 2030 Agenda that aims to eradicate poverty. The SDGs can be achieved only if the fundamental guiding principle of “not leaving any one behind” is adhered to and translated into action at global, regional and national levels. Above all we should get to the bottom of that which will actually make us not leave anyone behind. But what does not leaving anyone behind actually mean? It means expanding economic and employment opportunities to all so that people can earn an income and lead the lives they do not only desire, but deserve! In short it is about achieving human development for all!

LLDCs are faced with numerous inherent development challenges that are linked to their geographical position associated with distance and/or isolation from global markets. As LLDC's we are making efforts towards effective implementation of the SDGs. However, the progress is slow and mostly lag behind the averages of all the developing countries of the world. Deliberate measures are required to address the special challenges associated with landlockedness and ensure that these countries are not left behind.

**Mr. President,**

The Seven SDGs that we are reviewing in this year's session of the High Level Political Forum which are SDGs 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 14 and 17, are closely related to the challenges of LLDCs.

Eradicating poverty and achieving socio-economic prosperity continues to be at the centre of the development agenda of the

LLDCs. According to the Human Development Index, majority of the LLDCs improved their performance. However, out of the 44 countries classified as low human development countries with the lowest rankings, 16 were LLDCs. While the proportion of the population living below the international poverty line of \$1.90 per day has declined since 2002, the deprived population still remains high at around 30 per cent. LLDCs therefore, underscore the need scale-up and sustain efforts towards eradicating poverty by 2030.

In terms of SDG2, undernourishment in LLDCs has declined considerably over the last 15 years. However, more work remains to be done to make LLDCs comparable to developing countries. While Agriculture represents a dominant sector in many of the LLDCs, the effects of climate change, desertification and land degradation have negatively impacted it. In order to reverse the impact of climate change and address the challenge of undernourishment, LLDCs will need to be supported in enhancing agricultural productivity; build sustainable food systems and resilient agricultural practices.

**Mr. President,**

Regarding SDG 3, there has been steady improvement in LLDCs in reducing under-five mortality rates which have halved since 2000 to 67.9 per 1,000 live births in 2015. Progress was also made in stemming HIV, Malaria and Tuberculosis, although the incidence in LLDCs is still higher than the average for the developing world. Progress also continues to be made on access to sexual and reproductive health-care services. Despite all this, LLDCs still lag behind. It is against this backdrop that the international community is called upon to help consolidate and broaden the results so far achieved. This can be done through continued support, in particular by promoting and ensuring healthy lives and well-being of all in the LLDCs.

The LLDC's have made progress in the area of gender equality and empowerment of women and girls. Progress has also been registered among LLDCs in reducing harmful practices against women and girls. Further progress has been achieved in enhancing participation of women in different social, political and

economic spheres of life. For example, the proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments increased from just 8 per cent to 26 per cent between 2000 and 2017, higher than the world average. However, more effort is needed to ensure that women and girls have a safer space to operate from and make decisions that will contribute to the realisation of the 2030 Agenda.

**Mr. President,**

SDG 9 is of particular importance to the LLDCs. LLDCs face high trade and transport costs, and are beset by other challenges linked to inadequate infrastructure, high costs of ICT and energy. Trans-border infrastructure in most LLDCs are inadequate for supporting efficient trade facilitation.

In addition, our economies face constraints on structural transformation and economic diversification with signs of de-industrialization manifesting in most countries. These issues are at the heart of the Vienna Programme of Action for the LLDCs adopted in 2014.

It is very important that the infrastructure challenges are addressed, in particular in transport, energy and ICT sectors in order to ensure that the LLDCs are linked to global markets. In this regard, therefore, the LLDCs call for increased infrastructure financing, from public and private sources, development banks and financial institutions. Other innovative measures include, the establishment of dedicated infrastructure financing mechanisms for the LLDCs.

Further, LLDC's call for support in the area of technology transfer, research and innovation to aid our industrialisation efforts, which are necessary for promoting productivity, value addition and spur our ability to join the global value chains. At the closure of Agenda 2030, the World must create an environment where LLDCs should no longer export foods in raw form. We need to galvanise interest of all member states to enhance value addition on raw materials and create sound industrial base for finished products and create jobs and wealth.

**Mr. President,**

Oceans determine our climate and weather patterns that affect LLDCs. Further oceans have been and are still a major route for trade. Therefore, the implementation of SDG 14 is vital to our economies especially as this relate to increasing LLDCs ease access to the sea.

Regarding SDG 17, strengthened global partnerships remain important to address the challenges faced by the LLDCs and is key to achieve maximum impact. ODA remains a main source of external finance for many LLDCs and we call on our development partners to enhance their ODA support including through Aid for Trade and give greater consideration to the special needs of LLDCs. Equally important, is ensuring effective participation of LLDCs in international trade through technical assistance and improvement of transit-related logistics.

We recently witnessed a key landmark event in the multilateral trading system as the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement entered into force on 22nd February 2017. This Agreement is expected to reduce bureaucratic red tape at the border, simplifying customs procedures and improving enforcement capabilities through the application of technology solutions and institutional reforms. We call for support to ensure its rapid implementation so that the agreement translates into real benefits to the LLDCs.

LLDCs also require assistance in ensuring an enabling domestic environment to effectively attract foreign direct investment and enhancing private sector participation. Measures are required to support LLDCs deal with tax evasions and avoidance in broadening tax base. This will help LLDCs enhance their domestic financing and give effect to home grown development trajectory.

Lastly, I wish to stress that the initiatives and follow-up processes to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda should take into account special needs of LLDCs. These should assist in accelerating efforts towards achieving the SDGs.

The group of Land Locked Developing Countries therefore, looks forward to successful implementation of the SDGs and the outcome of the 2017 HLPF.

**I thank you.**