



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

SPEECH  
DELIVERED BY  
MINISTER OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL  
SERVICES ON BEHALF  
OF

HIS EXCELLENCY MR HAKAINDE HICHILEMA

AT

THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH  
DISABILITIES

AT LEVY MWANAWASA STADIUM IN NDOLA

ON 3<sup>RD</sup> DECEMBER 2021.

- **PROVINCIAL MINISTER FOR COPPERBELT PROVINCE-  
HONOURABLE ELISHA MATAMBO**
- **PERMANENT SECRETARIES PRESENT**
- **HEADS OF PARASTATAL ORGANIZATIONS**
- **THE ACTING UN COUNTRY RESIDENT COORDINATOR;  
NOALA SKINNER**
- **CHIEF OF MISSION, INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION FOR  
MIGRATION (IOM), MS. NCUBE NOMAGUGU**
- **INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION COUNTRY  
DIRECTOR-GEORGE OKOTHU**
- **ALL SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS PRESENT**
- **COOPERATING PARTNERS PRESENT;**
- **CHAIRPERSON OF THE 2021 NATIONAL IDPD COMMITTEE**
- **LEADERS OF ORGANISATIONS OF AND FOR PERSONS  
WITH DISABILITIES**
- **PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN ZAMBIA;**
- **MEMBERS OF THE PRESS;**
- **DISTINGUISHED INVITED GUESTS**
- **LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.**

I STAND HERE TO DELIVER THIS SPEECH ON BEHALF OF HIS EXCELLENCY, THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA, MR.

HAKAINDE HICHILEMA WHO SENDS HIS WARM GREETINGS TO ALL OF YOU.

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,**

TODAY, ZAMBIA JOINS THE REST OF THE WORLD IN COMMEMORATING THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES. A DAY ESTABLISHED BY THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN 1992 TO PROMOTE AN UNDERSTANDING OF DISABILITY ISSUES AND MOBILISE SUPPORT FOR THE DIGNITY, RIGHTS AND WELL-BEING OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES.

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, DISTINGUISHED GUESTS**

THIS COMMEMORATION OF THE 2021 INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES HAS BROUGHT TOGETHER A DIVERSITY OF STAKEHOLDERS TO DISCUSS AND ENGAGE ON THE INCLUSION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN OUR DEVELOPMENT AGENDA.

THIS YEAR'S INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IS BEING CELEBRATED UNDER THE THEME **“LEADERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES TOWARDS AN INCLUSIVE, ACCESSIBLE AND SUSTAINABLE POST COVID-19 WORLD”**.

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,**

IT IS ESTIMATED THAT THERE ARE ONE BILLION PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES WORLDWIDE REPRESENTING 15% OF THE WORLD'S POPULATION. 8% OF THIS POPULATION IS UNDERSTOOD TO LIVE IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. ZAMBIA'S DISABILITY PREVALENCE IS ESTIMATED AT 7.7% OF THE TOTAL POPULATION TRANSLATING INTO AT LEAST TWO MILLION PEOPLE.

HOWEVER, PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES HAVE CONTINUED TO EXPERIENCE STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION IN OUR SOCIETY. IT IS ESTIMATED THAT 8% OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES HAVE EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION IN ACCESSING PUBLIC SERVICES, A SITUATION THAT HINDERS OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS WITH DISABILITIES FROM FULLY PARTICIPATING IN SERVICE DELIVERY.

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, DISTINGUISHED GUESTS**

THE THEME FOR THIS YEAR'S COMMEMORATION RESOUNDS GOVERNMENT'S GUIDING PRINCIPLE OF A PEOPLE-CENTRED, PRO-POOR DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY THAT GUARANTEES THE AVAILABILITY OF BASIC NEEDS AND INCLUSIVENESS IN DEVELOPMENT FOR ALL THE PEOPLE OF ZAMBIA INCLUDING PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, REGARDLESS OF THEIR LANGUAGE, TRIBE, RELIGION OR COLOUR.

**DISTINGUISHED GUESTS,**

THE NEW DAWN GOVERNMENT HAS COMMITTED TO TAKING ALL THE NECESSARY STEPS TO MEET ESSENTIAL NEEDS AND PROMOTE THE PROTECTION, SAFETY AND RESPECT FOR THE DIGNITY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ESPECIALLY IN SITUATIONS OF RISK, HUMANITARIAN EMERGENCY OR IN ANY OCCURRENCE OF NATURAL RISKS SUCH AS THE COVID -19.

OUR GOVERNMENT HAS DEMONSTRATED THIS FROM THE JUST PRESENTED 2022 BUDGET WHICH REFLECTS AN INCREASED COMMITMENT TO THE SOCIAL SECTORS, WITH SIGNIFICANT INCREASES TO EDUCATION, HEALTH, SOCIAL PROTECTION, AND DISABILITY GRANT AIDED INSTITUTIONS.

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,**

THIS YEAR'S THEME IS A REMINDER TO EACH ONE OF US TO ACT ON THE FOLLOWING:

- i. MAINSTREAMING OF DISABILITY ISSUES AS PART OF NATIONAL POLICIES AND STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.
- ii. STRIVE TO GUARANTEE THE AVAILABILITY, AFFORDABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY TO SPECIALIZED SERVICES, ESPECIALLY ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGIES. WE NEED TO INVEST IN ZAMBIA'S CAPACITY TO LOCALLY START MANUFACTURING ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGIES WITHIN ZAMBIA USING LOCAL ARTISANS AT WARD LEVEL. THIS IS THE REASON WHY GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO

DECENTRALIZE DEVELOPMENT TO THE WARD LEVEL AS WE BELIEVE IN TRANSFERRING POWER, OWNERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITY OF DECISION MAKING TO THE PEOPLE. IT IS ON THIS BASIS THAT I DIRECT ALL LOCAL AUTHORITIES TO ENSURE THAT PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ARE INCLUDED IN THE COMPOSITION OF THE WARD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES.

- iii. WORK TOWARDS THE ELIMINATION OF PHYSICAL AND COMMUNICATION BARIERS THROUGH CONSTRUCTION OF ROADS AND BUILDINGS WITH UNIVERSALLY ACCEPTABLE DESIGNS TO ACCOMMODATE PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES. CONSTRUCTION OF ROADS AND BUILDINGS WITHOUT SPECIAL CONSIDERATION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES MUST COME TO AN END.
- iv. RECOGNISE THAT PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES FACE BARRIERS TO ACCESSING ESSENTIAL HEALTH CARE SERVICES. NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY (NHIMA) IS THEREFORE, CALLED UPON TO SPEND UP THE PROCESS OF PROVIDING HEALTH INSURANCE TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND OTHER VULNERBLE GROUPS ESPECIALLY THAT WE ARE IN THE MIDST OF A GLOBAL PANDEMIC THAT HAS GREATLY AFFECTED OUR HEALTH CARE SYSTEM.

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, DISTINGUISHED GUESTS,**

THE NEW DAWN GOVERNMENT REMAINS OPEN TO DISCUSSIONS ON STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS THAT WILL ACTUALISE

IMPLEMENTATION OF DISABILITY MATTERS ON LABOUR, TRANSPORT, HEALTH AND EDUCATION. I THEREFORE, DIRECT MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF THE FOREGOING TO CALL FOR AN INDABA WITH STAKEHOLDERS TO FIND A COMMON GROUND AND ESTABLISH MATTERS THAT CAN BE CONTAINED IN SUCH STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS.

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,**

MY GOVERNMENT IS READY TO PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND STRENGTHEN A QUOTA SYSTEM OF EMPLOYMENT TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES. THIS WILL PROMOTE EMPLOYABILITY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AS “DISABILITY IS NOT INABILITY”. APPOINTMENTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES TO INFLUENTIAL POSITIONS REMAINS A KEY PRIORITY IN THE SPIRIT OF LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND. ZAMBIA AGENCY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (ZAPD) MUST THEREFORE, CREATE A DATABASE OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES WITH THEIR QUALIFICATIONS TO ASSIST IN THE APPOINTMENTS.

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,**

I ALSO WISH TO REITERATE THE NEED FOR STRENGTHENING ZAPD IN ORDER FOR THE AGENCY TO EFFECTIVELY AND EFFICIENTLY LIVE UP TO ITS MANDATE AND EXPECTATIONS.

ZAPD MUST DRIVE THE DISABILITY AGENDA ON BEHALF OF GOVERNMENT AND SEE TO IT THAT NO PERSON WITH

DISABILITIES IS LEFT BEHIND. THE AGENCY IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE MINISTRY AND UN AGENCIES, MUST ALSO CHAMPION RESEARCH ON DISABILITY MATTERS IN ORDER TO GENERATE EVIDENCE THAT WILL INFORM AND GUIDE POLICY FORMULATION AND PROGRAMMING TO RESPOND TO SPECIFIC ISSUES ON DISABILITY.

### **LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, DISTINGUISHED GUESTS**

IN CONCLUSION, I WISH TO EXTEND MY SPECIAL GRATITUDE TO THE PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES WHO HAVE PARTICIPATED IN THIS IMPORTANT EVENT ACROSS THE COUNTRY. I ALSO WISH TO THANK THE UN AGENCIES IN ZAMBIA, INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION (ILO), UNICEF AND OTHERS FOR THE CONTINUED COLLABORATION ON DISABILITY ISSUES AND OTHER DEVELOPMENT ALL MATTERS IN THE COUNTRY. INDEED, OUR PARTNERSHIP IS AN IMPORTANT INGREDIENT TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AS WE STRIVE TO MAKE OUR SOCIETY ALL INCLUSIVE.

**MAY GOD BLESS YOU ALL**

**I THANK YOU**