

REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA



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SECOND UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON LANDLOCKED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES 3-5, NOVEMBER, 2014, VIENNA

**STATEMENT BY HON. YAMFWA MUKANGA, M.P.,
CHAIR OF THE GROUP OF LANDLOCKED DEVELOPING
COUNTRIES**

AND

**MINISTER OF TRANSPORT, WORKS, SUPPLY AND
COMMUNICATIONS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA**

His Excellency Sebastian Kurz, President of the Conference

His Excellency Heinz Fischer, President of the Republic of Austria (host country of the Conference)

His Excellency Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations

His Excellency Sam Kahamba Kutesa, President of the General Assembly

His Excellency Martin Sajdik, President of the Economic and Social Council

**Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Governments present
Excellencies Heads of delegations**

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

I wish to thank you Mr. President for giving me the floor to deliver this statement as Chair of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs).

This statement should have been delivered by the President of the Republic of Zambia H.E Mr. Michael Chilufya Sata, who unfortunately passed on last week, Tuesday 28th October. MHSRIP.

I know that alive and well, Mr. Sata would have loved to grace and participate in this important Conference as his vision resonated with improving the economic performance through improved dividends of land-lockedness as well as transformation of the challenges faced by landlocked countries into opportunities. The late President further believed in improved social economic well-being for the marginalized and the poor as well as reduced inequality gap, both within the country and across boundaries.

He believed in ensuring the implementation of developmental projects, especially infrastructure and was determined to see to it that Zambia was transformed into a truly land-linked country. For instance he initiated projects such as the Link Zambia 8000 that aimed at linking the country internally and to all the eight neighbouring countries to ease transportation and reduce trade impediments. The Late President supported Zambia's Chairmanship of the Group of LLDCs to try and seek global solutions collectively with the member countries and the international community at large. It is for this reason that Zambia has actively engaged in the preparations for the Second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries and is further participating at this conference during this time of bereavement.

I also wish to take this opportunity through this Conference to thank all member states for the overwhelming messages of condolences received by Zambia since the passing on of our President.

To our hosts, the Government and people of Austria, I wish to thank you most sincerely for the generosity in hosting this conference in this beautiful and historic City of Vienna. I further thank you for the warm hospitality extended to us, and the excellent conference facilities at our disposal.

We, as Landlocked Developing Countries draw a lot of inspiration from you as a Developed Landlocked Country. We shall endeavor to learn from you and emulate Best Practices from your experience to enable us forge ahead with great zeal and determination to achieve development in our own countries.

I also want to thank everyone who has made it possible for this Conference to take place, and please allow me to single out the Secretary General of the United Nations Mr. Ban Ki Moon and his staff at the United Nations Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries

and Small Island Developing States for their hard work and effort, in ensuring that this Conference takes place at this time. Let me also thank all those who contributed generously to the Trust Fund of the Secretary General.

Mr. President,

The challenges that LLDCs face due to their peculiar situation as a result of lack of territorial access to the Sea, resulting in remoteness and isolation from world markets, are well documented. We are all aware that, LLDCs face additional barriers such as border crossing, cumbersome transit procedures, and inefficient logistics systems and poor infrastructure leading to higher transport and other trade-related transaction costs in relation to their coastal neighbours. As a result, these high costs present a tremendous trade-reducing effect that has a direct negative impact on economic growth. Further, these challenges are compounded by the new emerging challenges such as climate change, disasters and external shocks. In addition, LLDCs are cut off from the global flows of knowledge, technology, capital and innovations.

Mr. President,

The 32 LLDCs, home to more than 440 million inhabitants, and with special developmental challenges should therefore have the attention of the global community and their priorities forming part of the core of the global development agenda.

Mr. President,

As we may be aware, a number of pre-Conference events were held, including the three regional review meetings and the two Preparatory Committee Meetings where the performance of LLDCs was reviewed in relation to the last decade of implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action.

Since the adoption of the Almaty Programme of Action in 2003, the Landlocked Developing Countries have made some progress on overall economic and social development. The average growth rates for the gross domestic product for the Landlocked Developing Countries increased from 5.2 per cent in 2003 to 5.7 per cent in 2012. However, this progress was uneven across the countries, volatile and did not translate to significant reduction in the levels of poverty. Gains have also been made in developing transit transport infrastructure including expansion of road networks, establishment of one-stop border posts; the introduction of electronic tracking systems; the use of a single administrative

document and increased use of electronic systems for customs clearance.

We have also witnessed incremental support from development partners and enhanced trade facilitation. The LLDCs as a group have improved their share of world trade over the past decade. The Millennium Development Goals equally catalyzed the improvements on the human and social development index including improvements in primary education and in stemming the spread of HIV/AIDS.

More, however still remains to be done. The progress has not been even. Progress has been slow and negatively affected by the combined effects of the multiple crises and new and emerging challenges including the global financial and economic crisis and the impact of climate change, desertification and land degradation.

While global trade share of LLDC improved, it was a very marginal increase from 0.6% to 1.2% while that of transit countries increased from 12.5% to 21.5% over the same period. The LLDC exports are mainly primary commodities without or with little value addition. Further LLDCs still lack adequate infrastructure in terms of transport and transit, border facilities,

ICTs and energy for the last decade after implementing the Almaty Programme of Action.

Mr. President,

With this stock taking, LLDCS believe that more needs to be done in order to increase competitiveness of the LLDC economies.

There is therefore an urgent need for New Program of Action to offer a holistic and result-oriented ten-year Programme of Action that provides a renewed and strengthened partnerships to assist LLDCs to realize benefits from international trade and to enable structural transformation of the economies for achievement of inclusive and sustainable growth. The next program of action should further complement the post 2015 development agenda in terms of the programs and sustainable development for LLDCs.

The following priorities for the LLDCs should be key areas of focus for implementation in the next decade;

- a) Fundamental transit policy issues that would continue to be implemented within the context of strengthened and renewed partnership with transit countries and partners is key for future development of these countries.

- b) Infrastructure development and maintenance that is focused on; 1) Transport infrastructure 2) Energy and ICT infrastructure
- c) International Trade and Trade Facilitation
- d) Regional integration and cooperation
- e) Structural Economic Transformation
- f) Means of implementation

Further, the new and emerging issues such as climate change, disasters, external shocks need to be addressed.

Mr. President,

I am well informed that negotiations on the Outcome Document have been quite protracted, and I want to thank everyone involved for the hard work and exhibiting the spirit of multilateralism of embracing determination and flexibility. It is in this vein that I am appealing to all stakeholders to ensure that we come out of Vienna with a holistic and result-oriented Ten Year Programme of Action with improved and innovative support measures as well as a defined mechanisms for collaboration of LLDCs with both Transit Countries and Development Partners.

As I have always stated, Vienna should not be an end in itself but to be a means of achieving sustainable development and economic competitiveness for LLDCs. Key to the implementation of the new Programme of Action is the need for adequate resources, capacity building, technology transfer and renewed and strengthened partnerships.

Zambia proposes that a follow up meeting be held to share the best strategies and approaches to implement the New Programme of Action in June 2015 in Zambia. I am therefore, appealing to all Member States of the United Nations to support this initiative.

I thank you for your attention.

