



# REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA



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## STATEMENT

BY

**HON. BRADFORD MACHILA, MP,  
MINISTER OF LANDS**

**ZAMBIAN DELEGATION TO THE 63<sup>RD</sup> REGULAR SESSION OF  
THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

ON

**THE OCCASION OF THE HIGH-LEVEL MEETING  
ON THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

**“FIRST ROUND TABLE ON POVERTY AND HUNGER”**

New York  
25<sup>th</sup> September 2008

Mr. Chairman,

Zambia wishes to add her voice in commending the Secretary General for organising this high level event to take stock of existing gaps at the mid-point of the set target date of 2015 for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). My country also feels that the Political Declaration on Africa's Development Needs adopted at the High Level Meeting held on 22 September will be an important input into this meeting.

This meeting will recall that in the year 2000, the developing world embraced the MDGs as a comprehensive strategy to move our countries out of the economic and social decline and better integrate into the global economy. We have now passed the midpoint between the adoption of the goals and the target date of 2015 and the reality is that many countries are far from attaining most of the goals.

Mr. Chairman,

This is so, inspite of the recorded improved economic performance by some developing countries, Zambia included, following the recent debt relief initiatives coupled with sustained prudent economic management. However, while Zambia's economy has grown at an average of 5.5% in the last few year, these economic gains have not translated into significant decline in the incidence of poverty which stands at 64 percent. Zambia's development efforts are further compromised by the HIV/AIDS pandemic, the adverse effects of Climate Change and now the high food prices, energy crisis and the imminent global financial crisis.

Mr. Chairman,

At the current rate of Zambia's economic growth in the recent past, the country would have been on course to meet all but one of the MDGs, namely that of ensuring environmental sustainability. However, the impact of food prices and the escalating energy costs threaten to reverse this positive trend. The MDG on environmental sustainability will not be met due to the removal of forest and woodland cover in many parts of the country which has led to the early drying up of seasonal streams and of formerly perennial rivers. Deforestation due to illegal commercial logging, wood fuel harvesting, uncontrolled fires and expansion of agricultural and mining activities in most forests has had a negative impact on environmental sustainability.

Mr. Chairman,

Zambia's main focus now is to translate the economic achievements into tangible improvements in the quality of life of its people. This goal is clearly enshrined in Zambia's Vision 2030, which envisages that the country will be a middle income

industrialised nation that would have significantly reduced hunger and poverty and fostered a competitive and outward oriented economy.

Mr. Chairman,

With this in mind, let me now briefly address the theme of this round table, 'Poverty and Hunger'. This goal may remain elusive for Zambia if the cooperating partners do not play their part and fulfill their commitments. It is sad to note that net official development assistance (in constant prices) dropped by 4.7 percent in 2006 and a further 8.4 percent in 2007. Only five countries have met or exceeded the 0.7 percent of their Gross National Income (GNI) to be provided as ODA.

Mr. Chairman,

Zambia has identified the agriculture sector as a priority sector in reducing poverty, combating hunger and malnutrition and accelerating growth in the country. In this regard, the government has continued with the Fertiliser Support Programme for small-scale farmers in order to increase food production and enhance food security at household and national level. There has also been a reduction on duty for agricultural inputs as well as reductions on tariffs for water and electricity used for agricultural purposes. The Government has also set up the Citizens' Economic Empowerment Commission which operates a fund that will provide capital to citizens to allow them to actively participate in the economy. Priority access to the fund will be provided to the youth, women, people with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups in order to enable them undertake various developmental, income and employment generating projects.

Mr. Chairman,

Zambia is determined to meet the targets of the MDGs by the stipulated deadline and calls on the international community to play its part by honouring commitments made in terms of ODA, removing unfair trade practices, provision of new technologies, provision of accessibility to essential drugs and ensuring debt sustainability.

I thank you.