



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

MINISTRY OF ENERGY

**STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF ENERGY,
HONOURABLE PETER KAPALA, MP AT THE LAUNCH OF
ACCELERATING SUSTAINABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY
ACCESS TRANSFORMATION (ASCENT) MULTI
PROGRAMMATIC APPROACH (MPA)**

JUNE 2024

- **YOUR EXCELLENCY COMESA SECRETARY GENERAL, MADAM CHILESHE MPUNDU KAPWEPWE,**
- **YOUR EXCELLENCY COMESA ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL FOR PROGRAMMES, AMBASSADOR DR. MOHAMED KADAH,**
- **YOUR EXCELLENCY COMESA ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL FOR ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE, DR. DEV HAMAN,**
- **WORLD BANK DIRECTOR OF REGIONAL INTEGRATION - AFRICA, MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA, MADAM BOUTHEINA GUERMAZI,**
- **MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS,**
- **PERMANENT SECRETARIES AND SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS PRESENT,**
- **DISTINGUISHED GUESTS.**
- **REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MEDIA,**
- **LADIES AND GENTLEMEN**

I WISH TO WELCOME YOU ALL TO ZAMBIA AND OUR CAPITAL CITY LUSAKA THE HOST CITY OF THE COMMON MARKET FOR EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA (COMESA), WHERE WE ARE OFFICIALLY LAUNCHING THE **ACCELERATING SUSTAINABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY ACCESS TRANSFORMATION (ASCENT) PROGRAMME.**

EXCELLENCIES,

ALLOW ME TO THANK COMESA AND THE WORLD BANK FOR PLANNING, DESIGNING, FUNDING AND PARTNERING TOGETHER FOR THE LAUNCH AND ULTIMATELY THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ASCENT PROGRAMME. THIS PROGRAMME IS IN LINE WITH GOVERNMENT ASPIRATIONS IMPROVING THE LIVELIHOOD OF ZAMBIANS (AND THE REGIONAL TRADE BLOCK) THROUGH INCREASED ACCESS TO SUSTAINABLE ENERGY AND ENERGY SERVICES.

ENERGY UNDERPINS SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. HOWEVER, DESPITE THIS CRITICAL IMPORTANCE AND THE MASSIVE TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS THAT HAVE OCCURRED IN MODERN HISTORY, ACCESS TO SUSTAINABLE AND COST-EFFECTIVE ENERGY REMAINS A DREAM TO A CONSIDERABLE PORTION OF THE

COMESA POPULATION. THIS ENERGY ACCESS CHALLENGE IS FURTHER EXACERBATED BY THE HUGE DISPROPORTIONS IN FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS NEEDED FOR INNOVATIONS AND COLLABORATION AMONG THE VARIOUS ACTORS IN THE ENERGY SECTOR.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ACCESS TO SUSTAINABLE ENERGY IN ZAMBIA AND THE REGION CANNOT BE OVER EMPHASIZED. THE GROWING ENERGY DEMANDS, CURRENT ELECTRICITY DEFICIT, ENERGY TRANSITION APPEAR TO OVERWHELM OUR EFFORTS TODAY.

HOWEVER, THE RESILIENCE OF HUMANITY HAS ALWAYS SUCCEEDED AND WITH THIS, I AM CONFIDENT THAT THE ASCENT PROGRAMME WILL CONSOLIDATE EFFORTS IN BOTH GRID AND OFF GRID ELECTRICITY CONNECTIONS, RENEWABLE ENERGY SOLUTIONS, CLEAN COOKING TECHNOLOGIES AND FUELS.

GOVERNMENT THROUGH THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY HAS CONTINUED TO PROMOTE DIVERSIFICATION OF THE ENERGY MIX IN AN EFFORT TO MITIGATE THE SECTOR FROM ADVERSE EFFECTS OF DROUGHT AND CLIMATE CHANGE.

THIS CHALLENGE IS NOT UNIQUE TO ZAMBIA ALONE BUT SUPPORT FROM COMESA, THE WORLD BANK AND OTHER PARTNERS THROUGH THE ASCENT PROGRAMME IS ASSURING.

IT'S THIS ASSURING COMFORT THAT ZAMBIANS AND MEMBERS OF COMESA CAN BE OPTIMISTIC OF POSSIBLE OPPORTUNITIES IN VALUE ADDITIONS, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT RELATED TO THE ENTIRE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABLE ENERGY TRANSITION.

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS,

IT IS EVIDENT THAT THE LACK OF ACCESS TO SUSTAINABLE ENERGY ENTAILS INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES BEING STRIPPED OF QUALITY HEALTH AND EDUCATION SERVICES, GENERAL SOCIAL WELFARE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN, WHO BEAR THE BRUNT OF ENERGY POVERTY, THIS IMPLIES SPENDING LONG HOURS FETCHING FIREWOOD AND EXPOSURE TO GASES

AND OTHER HAZARDS TO THEIR WELL-BEING. AM CONFIDENT THROUGH THE CLEAN COOKING TECHNOLOGY AND FUELS COMPONENT OF THE ASCENT PROGRAMME THAT THIS CHALLENGE WILL BEGIN TO SHRINK.

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS,

CREATIVE FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS AND FRAMEWORKS ARE IMPORTANT TO MOBILISE THE REQUIRED RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE ENERGY. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS SUCH AS BLENDED FINANCE PLAY A VITAL ROLE IN DE-RISKING PROJECTS AND ATTRACTING PRIVATE FUNDS. AGAIN, AM CONFIDENT THE PROGRAMME WE LAUNCH TODAY HAS TAKEN THIS CONSIDERATION THROUGH DIFFERENT FINANCING AND POTENTIAL PARTNERS.

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS,

ALLOW ME TO EXPRESS OUR APPRECIATION FOR THE SUPPORT BEING RENDERED TO ZAMBIA BY THE WORLD BANK TO ENSURE THAT WE SUCCESSFULLY NAVIGATE THE CHALLENGES THAT WE ARE CURRENTLY FACING.

ONE OF THE NOTABLE PROJECTS THE WORLD BANK IS SUPPORTING IS THE ZAMBIA TANZANIA INTERCONNECTOR (ZTK) WHICH WILL SEE ZAMBIA AND THE SOUTHERN AFRICA POWER POOL (SAPP) BEING CONNECTED TO THE EASTERN AFRICA POWER POOL (EAPP) VIA TANZANIA.

ADDITIONALLY, ZAMBIA AND THE WORLD BANK HAVE SUCCESSFULLY FORMULATED THE PROPOSED NATIONAL ENERGY ACCESS AND TRANSFORMATION (NEAT) MULTI-PROGRAMMATIC APPROACH (MPA) WHICH IS A ZAMBIA-SPECIFIC PROGRAM DESIGNED TO RETURN THE ELECTRICITY SUB SECTOR TO STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY.

THE NEAT PROGRAM AIMS TO IMPROVE THE FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY, RELIABILITY, AND RESILIENCE OF ZAMBIA'S ELECTRICITY SECTOR.

AS ZAMBIA, WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO REAPING BENEFITS FROM THE REGIONAL ASCENT PLATFORM BEING IMPLEMENTED BY COMESA. WE BELIEVE THAT THE REGIONAL ASCENT PLATFORM WILL ENHANCE KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND

PROVIDE ADVISORY SUPPORT TO ALL REGIONAL COUNTRIES. ***EXCELLENCIES,
AND DISTINGUISHED GUESTS,***

AS I CONCLUDE, LET US REMIND OURSELVES THAT THE ASPIRATION TO UNIVERSAL SUSTAINABLE ENERGY ACCESS REMAINS HIGH ON THE AGENDA. TOGETHER AS WE PROMOTE COOPERATION, LEVERAGING INNOVATIVE FINANCIAL MODELS AND SUPPORTING RENEWABLE ENERGY, WE CAN CREATE A FUTURE WHERE EVERY INDIVIDUAL HAS ACCESS TO CLEAN, AFFORDABLE AND RELIABLE ENERGY.

I WISH YOU ALL FRUITFUL DELIBERATIONS, KNOWING THAT THE IDEAS AND EXPERIENCES SHARED HERE HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE ADVANCEMENT IN THE REGION AND OF OUR CONTINENT AT LARGE.

AT THIS JUNCTURE, IT IS MY SINGULAR HONOUR TO DECLARE THE MEETING OFFICIALLY OPEN.

I THANK YOU.