



**Republic of Zambia**

4<sup>TH</sup> NATIONAL ADDRESS ON COVID-19 BY HIS  
EXCELLENCY, DR EDGAR CHAGWA LUNGU,  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

8<sup>TH</sup> MAY, 2020

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**STATE HOUSE**

## **FELLOW COUNTRYMEN AND WOMEN;**

1. I WOULD LIKE TO START MY ADDRESS TODAY BY THANKING YOU, THE PEOPLE OF ZAMBIA FOR THE UNDERSTANDING, RESILIENCE AND SUPPORT MY ADMINISTRATION HAS RECEIVED SINCE I ANNOUNCED THE FIRST MEASURES AIMED AT PROTECTING OUR LIVES FROM THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

2. I KNOW AND FULLY UNDERSTAND THAT IT HAS NOT BEEN EASY TO LIVE OUR LIVES IN A WAY THAT IS DRASTICALLY DIFFERENT FROM WHAT WE HAVE BEEN USED TO, BUT THE GRACE OF GOD HAS SEEN US THUS FAR! I KNOW THAT MANY OF YOU, ESPECIALLY IN THE INFORMAL SECTOR, HAVE HAD YOUR BUSINESSES SUFFER GREATLY. I KNOW THAT OUR CHILDREN HAVE HAD THEIR EDUCATIONAL PROGRESSION HINDERED AS A RESULT OF THE CLOSURE OF SCHOOLS, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES.

3. I KNOW THAT MANY LIVES HAVE CHANGED IN VARIOUS WAYS AS A RESULT OF THE MEASURES WE HAVE TAKEN DURING THIS COVID-19 PANDEMIC. THIS SITUATION IS NOT OUR OWN MAKING. OUR DECISIONS AS GOVERNMENT HAVE BEEN INEVITABLE AND PREMISED ON OUR DUTY TO SAVE LIVES.

4. AS WE RESPOND TO COVID-19, MY GOVERNMENT IS STRIKING A DELICATE BALANCE BETWEEN SAVING LIVES AND RESTORING THE ECONOMY.

5. AS YOU MAY BE AWARE, THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND ITS EVOLUTION HAS COMPELLED GOVERNMENTS, THE WORLD-OVER, TO IMPLEMENT DRASTIC MEASURES TO FIGHT THE DISEASE, AND ZAMBIA IS NO EXCEPTION.

## **COUNTRYMEN AND WOMEN,**

6. I AM AWARE OF THE GLOBAL PATTERN AND DEVASTATING IMPACT OF THE DISEASE ON THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SPHERES.

7. GLOBALLY, CLOSE TO FOUR MILLION POSITIVE CASES OF COVID-19 HAVE NOW BEEN RECORDED. OUT OF THESE, MORE THAN ONE MILLION HAVE RECOVERED, WHILE ALMOST TWO HUNDRED AND SEVENTY THOUSAND HAVE DIED.

## **COUNTRYMEN AND WOMEN,**

8. IN THE LAST 24 HOURS, ZAMBIA HAS RECORDED 14 POSITIVE CASES OUT OF 683 TESTS. THEY COMPRISE SIX TRUCK DRIVERS TESTED IN CHIRUNDU, TWO HEALTHCARE WORKERS IN LUSAKA AND KABWE, ONE CONTACT TO A POSITIVE CASE, ONE FROM ROUTINE SCREENING AT NDOLA CENTRAL HOSPITAL,

AND THREE PATIENTS FROM HEALTH FACILITY SCREENING, AND ONE TANZANIAN LORRY MATE SCREENED IN CHILILABOMBWE.

## **COUNTRYMEN AND WOMEN,**

9. THE TREND ANALYSIS IN GENERAL TERMS, OVER A PERIOD OF CLOSE TO TWO MONTHS SINCE ZAMBIA RECORDED ITS FIRST CASE OF COVID-19, HAS REVEALED THE FOLLOWING:

- i. 167 HAVE TESTED POSITIVE TO COVID-19 OUT OF 11,352 TESTED, REPRESENTING 1.5 PERCENT OF THOSE TESTED;
- ii. OF THE 167 POSITIVE CASES RECORDED AND QUARANTINED, 109 HAVE SINCE FULLY RECOVERED, DISCHARGED AND HAVE HAPPILY REJOINED THEIR FAMILIES. THIS IS A REMARKABLE ACHIEVEMENT.

iii. ON A SAD NOTE, ZAMBIA HAS EXPERIENCED FOUR DEATHS RELATED TO COVID-19. HOWEVER, MEDICAL REPORTS OF THE THREE OF THESE RECORDED DEATHS, SHOWED THEY HAD SERIOUS UNDERLYING HEALTH CONDITIONS.

### **COUNTRYMEN AND WOMEN,**

10. FROM THIS TREND ANALYSIS, WE NOTE THAT THE NUMBER OF INFECTIONS RECORDED AFTER TESTING IN COMMUNITIES HAS REMAINED GENERALLY LOW.

11. WE FURTHER NOTE THAT THE HEALTH STATUS OF THE PATIENTS THAT ARE POSITIVE AND UNDER TREATMENT FOR COVID-19, IS GENERALLY STABLE.

12. IT IS EQUALLY OBSERVED THAT THE NUMBER OF RECOVERIES HAS CONSISTENTLY REMAINED HIGH AMONG OUR PEOPLE.
13. FROM THIS TREND ANALYSIS, IT CAN BE GENERALLY SAID THAT THIS PANDEMIC, IN THE CASE OF ZAMBIA, IS RELATIVELY DIFFERENT FROM WHAT OTHER NATIONS ARE EXPERIENCING, WHERE THEIR INFECTION AND DEATH RATES HAVE BEEN MUCH HIGHER.
14. HOWEVER, THESE NATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN HARDEST HIT BY THE PANDEMIC ARE STILL STRUGGLING, BUT, UNLIKE US, THEY HAVE BEGAN TO OPEN UP THEIR SOCIO-ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF THE “NEW NORMAL – LIVING WITH COVID-19”.

15. THE “NEW NORMAL” MEANS LIVING WITH COVID-19 JUST LIKE WE HAVE LIVED WITH OTHER DISEASES SUCH AS, MALARIA, HIV AND AIDS, AND TUBERCULOSIS, PROVIDED WE ADHERE TO THE PRESCRIBED HEALTH GUIDELINES, REGULATIONS AND CERTIFICATION FOR COVID-19.

### **COUNTRYMEN AND WOMEN,**

16. IN EMBRACING “THE NEW NORMAL-LIVING WITH COVID-19”, LET US CONTINUE TO VIGOROUSLY FIGHT THIS DISEASE AND NOT BECOME COMPLACENT.

17. THE COMPLEXITY OF COVID-19 REALLY CALLS FOR OUR **ZAMBIAN** SCIENTISTS TO GET TO WORK AND ANSWER THE MANY QUESTIONS SURROUNDING CORONAVIRUS.



THEIR FINDINGS WILL HELP GOVERNMENT TO MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS. LET US NOT ENTIRELY DEPEND ON OTHER COUNTRY'S FINDINGS.

### **COUNTRYMEN AND WOMEN,**

18. GLOBALLY, YOU ARE ALL AWARE THAT, THE PANDEMIC HAS NEGATIVELY AFFECTED ALL SECTORS OF THE WORLD ECONOMY, WHICH INCLUDE: AVIATION; TOURISM; SOCIAL SECURITY; AS WELL AS THE LABOUR MARKET. ZAMBIA IS INDEED NO EXCEPTION AND WE BELIEVE THAT THE NEGATIVE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT BEING EXPERIENCED THE WORLD-OVER.

19. AT COUNTRY LEVEL, I AM FULLY AWARE THAT THE PANDEMIC, AS WELL AS, THE MEASURES WE HAVE TAKEN AS A GOVERNMENT, IN OUR QUEST TO SAVE LIVES, HAVE HAD A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT.
20. AS A RESULT, WE HAVE EXPERIENCED REDUCED REVENUE, THEREBY, IMPACTING NEGATIVELY ON THE FINANCING OF NATIONAL PROGRAMMES. IF THE STATUS QUO REMAINS, REST ASSURED THAT THE ECONOMY WILL PLUNGE INTO THE WORST CRISIS OUR COUNTRY HAS EVER EXPERIENCED. HOWEVER, WE MUST BE MINDFUL OF THE NEED TO STEADILY PROGRESS INTO LIVING IN THE “NEW NORMAL” FOR THE SAKE OF OUR HEALTH AND THE HEALTH OF OUR ECONOMY.

21. THIS CALLS FOR US TO REVIEW THE MEASURES WITH A VIEW TO CAUTIOUSLY AND STRATEGICALLY BEGIN TO EASE SO THAT THE VARIOUS SECTORS OF OUR ECONOMY CAN START OPERATING WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE “NEW NORMAL”.

**COUNTRYMEN AND WOMEN,**

22. I HAVE SEEN IT INEVITABLE FOR RESTAURANTS TO REVERT TO THEIR NORMAL OPERATIONS, ON CONDITION OF ADHERING TO THE PRESCRIBED PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDELINES, REGULATIONS AND CERTIFICATION.

23. I FURTHER DIRECT THE REOPENING OF CINEMAS, GYMNASIUMS, AND CASINOS IN LINE WITH “THE NEW NORMAL”, WHILE ADHERING TO THE PRESCRIBED PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDELINES, REGULATIONS AND CERTIFICATION.

24. AS YOU ARE ALL AWARE, MANY BUSINESSES SUCH AS, HOTELS, LODGES, TOUR OPERATORS, INTERNET CAFES, AS WELL AS, EVENT MANAGEMENT COMPANIES, WERE VOLUNTARILY CLOSED AS A RESULT OF THE COVID-19, SO AS TO PROTECT THEMSELVES, THEIR EMPLOYEES, AS WELL AS THEIR CLIENTS.
25. I, THEREFORE, WISH TO APPEAL TO THE PROPRIETORS TO CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY OF GETTING BACK TO NORMAL OPERATIONS WHILE OBSERVING PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDELINES, REGULATIONS AND CERTIFICATION.
26. REMEMBER, ALL ADJUSTMENTS ARE SUBJECT TO PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDELINES, REGULATIONS AND CERTIFICATION SUCH AS WEARING FACE MASKS; OBSERVING SOCIAL DISTANCING; HAND WASHING AND SANITISING; AND ENSURING HIGH LEVELS OF HYGIENE.

THESE MEASURES WILL BE FOR A PERIOD OF SEVEN TO FOURTEEN DAYS AND MAY BE REVIEWED ANY TIME AS THE PANDEMIC EVOLVES.

### **COUNTRYMEN AND WOMEN,**

27. IN MY PREVIOUS ADDRESS, I ANNOUNCED THE CREATION OF A COVID-19 ECONOMIC RECOVERY FUND AND DIRECTED THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND OTHER RELEVANT MINISTRIES TO CONSOLIDATE RESOURCES TO BE DISBURSED TO SMALL AND MEDIUM BUSINESSES, WOMEN GROUPS, THE YOUTH AND THE MOST VULNERABLE THAT HAVE BEEN THE HARDEST HIT.

28. SO FAR, I AM AWARE THAT THE MODALITIES OF DISBURSEMENT OF THE TEN BILLION KWACHA UNDER THE BANK OF ZAMBIA HAVE NOT BEEN ADEQUATELY COMMUNICATED TO THE WOULD BE BENEFICIARIES, SUCH AS SCHOOLS, GYMNASIUMS, NIGHTCLUB OWNERS, CINEMAS, RESTAURANTS, AND BARS. I AM, THEREFORE, DIRECTING THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE TO ENSURE THAT THE MODALITIES ARE URGENTLY COMMUNICATED AND THE COLLATERAL DEMANDED FROM THE INTENDED BENEFICIARIES ARE REALISTIC.

### **COUNTRYMEN AND WOMEN,**

29. I AM AWARE THAT IF SCHOOLS, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES REMAIN CLOSED, WE SHALL HAVE AN EDUCATION CRISIS AS THEIR CALENDARS WOULD BE TERRIBLY AFFECTED.

ALREADY OUR CHILDREN ARE WAY BEHIND SINCE THE SCHOOLS WERE CLOSED AND THAT IS AN EDUCATION CRISIS IN THE MAKING.

30. I AM WORRIED ABOUT OUR CHILDREN WHO ARE TIRED AND BORED OF STAYING AT HOME ALL DAY, AND WE ARE SEEING INSTANCES OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY INCREASING IN SOME CASES. I AM FURTHER CONCERNED THAT IF THE SCHOOLS REMAINED CLOSED, THERE IS A LIKELIHOOD OF AN INCREASE IN THE MORAL DECAY OF OUR CHILDREN AND THE YOUTH AS A RESULT OF THEM HAVING MORE FREE TIME. AN IDLE MIND IS THE DEVIL'S WORKSHOP, GOES THE OLD SAYING.

31. AS MUCH AS ALL CLASSES ARE IMPORTANT FOR THE EDUCATION OF OUR CHILDREN, WE MUST CAUTIOUSLY AND STRATEGICALLY MANAGE THE REOPENING OF THE SCHOOLS IN LIGHT OF COVID-19. IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT IN THE CONTEXT OF THE 'NEW NORMAL', I AM DIRECTING THAT THE FIRST CLASSES TO REOPEN WILL BE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL EXAMINATION CLASSES ON FIRST JUNE, 2020 ON CONDITION THAT SCHOOLS ENFORCE ALL PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDELINES, REGULATIONS AND CERTIFICATION AS STATED EARLIER.



32. I FURTHER DIRECT THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND THE DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND MITIGATION UNIT TO ENSURE THAT FACE MASKS, HAND WASHING SOAPS AND SANITISERS ARE PRIORITISED AND PROVIDED TO ALL SCHOOLS AND HEALTH CENTRES FOR DISTRIBUTION AND USE BY OUR CHILDREN, STARTING WITH THOSE IN EXAMINATION CLASSES.
33. IN ADDITION, I DIRECT THE MINISTERS OF GENERAL EDUCATION, AND HIGHER EDUCATION TO ENGAGE AND CONSULT VARIOUS STAKEHOLDERS ON THE POSSIBILITY AND MODALITIES OF REOPENING NON-EXAMINATION CLASSES, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

## **COUNTRYMEN AND WOMEN,**

34. I MUST REMIND EVERYONE THAT THE BATTLE AGAINST COVID-19 IS STILL WITH US AND NOT YET WON. AS WE FIGHT COVID-19, MY GOVERNMENT WILL ENSURE RESILIENCE AND BALANCE IN OUR HEALTH SYSTEMS AND CONTINUED PROVISION OF ALL HEALTHCARE SERVICES TO OUR CITIZENS.
35. I WANT TO ASSURE YOU THAT AS WE FIGHT COVID-19, WE WILL CONTINUE TO INVEST IN MATERNAL, CHILD HEALTH, NUTRITION, THE FIGHT AGAINST HIV/AIDS, TUBERCULOSIS, OTHER COMMUNICABLE AND NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES.
36. AS HEAD OF STATE, I WILL KEEP OBSERVING THE SITUATION AS IT UNFOLDS AND PROVIDE NECESSARY GUIDANCE.

37. THIS PANDEMIC PROVIDES AN OPPORTUNITY TO START OUR SOCIO AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY TRAJECTORY TOWARDS MAKING IT MORE RESILIENT AS WE LIVE WITH THE “NEW NORMAL” AND STRENGTHEN THE PROVISIONS OF ESSENTIAL SERVICES FOR OUR PEOPLE.
38. FOR THE MOST VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES, I URGE THE RELEVANT AUTHORITIES TO ENSURE UNINTERRUPTED SUPPLIES OF ESSENTIAL GOODS AND SERVICES THROUGH THE PROVISION OF RELIEF, BOTH FOOD AND NON-FOOD ITEMS.
39. MEANWHILE, I WISH TO REITERATE THE MEASURES THAT I HAVE CONSISTENTLY STATED TO THE NATION, OF ENSURING SOCIAL DISTANCING, WASHING OF HANDS, AND HAND SANITISING, WEARING OF FACE MASKS, AND GENERALLY MAINTAINING HIGH LEVELS OF HYGIENE.

40. LET US REMEMBER TO BE OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS KEEPERS IN ENSURING WE MAKE THIS “NEW NORMAL” EASIER TO LIVE WITH. LET US AVOID UNNECESSARY MOVEMENTS TO CURB THE SPREAD OF THE DISEASE.
41. IN CONCLUSION, LET ME START BY THANKING ALL FRONT LINE WORKERS WHO ARE INDEED OUR HEROES AND HEROINES IN THIS FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19. IN THIS REGARD, I REITERATE MY EARLIER DIRECTIVE TO THE MINISTER OF HEALTH TO ENSURE NECESSARY OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY MEASURES ARE STRENGTHENED TO PROTECT OUR HEALTHCARE WORKERS FROM ACQUIRING COVID-19 AND OTHER INFECTIONS IN HEALTHCARE SETTINGS.

42. LET ME THANK ALL COOPERATING PARTNERS AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS, WHO HAVE GENEROUSLY DONATED AND SUPPORTED MY GOVERNMENT IN THE FIGHT AGAINST THE DEADLY CORONAVIRUS DISEASE. LET ME ALSO THANK THE PRIVATE SECTOR, INDIVIDUALS AND THE MEDIA WHO HAVE JOINED IN SUPPORTING THE PEOPLE OF ZAMBIA IN THE FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19.

43. LET ME TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO URGE PROVINCIAL MINISTERS TO CONTINUE PROVIDING LEADERSHIP AND OVERSIGHT IN COORDINATING MULTISECTORAL STAKEHOLDERS IN THEIR RESPECTIVE JURISDICTIONS AND ENSURE ENFORCEMENT OF THE COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH MEASURES AS STIPULATED IN STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS NUMBER 21 AND 22 OF 2020, AS WELL AS THE ADDITIONAL DIRECTIVES I ANNOUNCED DURING MY LAST NATIONAL ADDRESS.
44. I FURTHER DIRECT THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH TO WORK CLOSELY WITH THE MINISTRIES OF COMMERCE, TRADE AND INDUSTRY; TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS; LOCAL GOVERNMENT;

AND HOME AFFAIRS TO ENSURE ADHERENCE TO THE ALREADY PROVIDED FOR INTERVENTIONS TO PREVENT TRANSMISSION OF COVID-19 WHILE ALLOWING ECONOMIC ACTIVITY, AND MOVEMENT OF ESSENTIAL GOODS AND SERVICES AS WELL AS CONTINUATION OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY.

45. OUR PRESENT SITUATION ALSO PRESENTS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR MORE CITIZENS TO BECOME SELF-RELIANT AND VENTURE INTO NON-TRADITIONAL, BUT LUCRATIVE SECTORS OF OUR ECONOMY SUCH AS AGRICULTURE, AQUACULTURE, FORESTRY AND ICT INDUSTRIES, AMONG OTHERS. THESE ARE UNUSUAL TIMES AND THEY CALL FOR COLLECTIVE INNOVATIVE AND UNPRECEDENTED APPROACHES.

MY GOVERNMENT WILL, THEREFORE, ENSURE THAT WE STRIKE A DELICATE STRATEGIC BALANCE BETWEEN THE HEALTH OF OUR CITIZENS AND PROMOTING ECONOMIC ACTIVITY. TOGETHER, WE CAN DEFEAT COVID-19 AND RETURN TO NORMALCY.

46. I WISH TO EMPHASISE THAT THE 'NEW NORMAL' IS HERE, THE 'NEW NORMAL' MEANS LIVING WITH COVID-19 WHILE OBSERVING PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDELINES AND REGULATIONS. AND THE 'NEW NORMAL' MEANS SOCIAL DISTANCING, ALWAYS WEARING FACE MASKS IN PUBLIC PLACES, WASHING OF HANDS REGULARLY AND SANITISING.



47. ABOVE ALL, LET US CONTINUE TO SEEK THE  
FACE OF GOD, PARTICULARLY DURING THIS  
TIME OF COVID-19.

MAY THE ALMIGHTY GOD BLESS YOU ALL.

I THANK YOU.