



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

SPEECH BY

HIS EXCELLENCY MR. EDGAR CHAGWA LUNGU

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

ON THE

**JOINT 62ND ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE LOCAL
GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION OF ZAMBIA AND THE
15TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE ALLIANCE OF
MAYORS AND MUNICIPAL LEADERS HELD AT NEW
GOVERNMENT COMPLEX, LUSAKA ON 23RD APRIL,
2018**

The Minister of Local Government;
The Provincial Minister, Lusaka Province;
All Cabinet Ministers Present;
The President of the Local Government Association of Zambia;
Mayor of the City of Lusaka;
Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Local Government;
Permanent Secretary, Lusaka Province;
All Permanent Secretaries present;
The Chairperson, Local Government Service Commission;
Visiting Mayors and Council Chairpersons;
The Executive Secretary, Local Government Association of Zambia;
All District Commissioners present;
Senior Government and Local Government Officials;
Aldermen and Councillors;
Cooperating Partners present;
Members of the Press;
Distinguished invited Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen

I would like to start by expressing my gratitude to you the President of the Local Government Association of Zambia and the entire membership of the Association for extending an invitation for me to come and grace this important occasion in your calendar. I am so grateful for your generosity of words of gratitude attributed to me and my Administration.

Let me congratulate your Association on this occasion of its **62nd** Annual Conference since its founding in **1947**. During this period, your Association has not only taken the narrow sense of protecting your Members' interests but has made efforts collectively as a team to shape the future of the Local Government System into a strategic sphere as we strive

to achieve national development goals. I commend the Association for this effort. Let me take this opportunity to remind you and the Nation that Local Government is a critical component of the Executive Arm of Government of the Republic of Zambia. To this effect my Government will always be open to progressive and positive ideas that would enhance the performance of the Local Authorities, because Local Government exist at the local level to represent and serve our people on the front line in accordance with our Government and people's aspirations.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Mr. President, it is a moral virtue for each one of us to ensure that we maintain a clean environment. Besides, the Constitution under Article **151 (2) (f)** places an obligation on Local Government to promote a clean, safe and healthy environment. It is unfortunate that deteriorating quality of our environment has contributed to the loss of life and we are all witness to this sad situation. Keeping our environment clean and green is very essential for human survival and well-being as well as sustainable development. The choice of the theme: **"Sustainable Development Starts Locally: Creating Synergies for a Clean and Green Environment"** resonates well with these obligations.

To this effect, I challenge all the delegates to this conference to reflect and take a good look at what is working and what is not working for us to improve the cleanliness, safety and health of our environment in our towns, municipalities and cities. This will really empower us as a Nation to gain awareness, improve and become better humans and societies. As John Dewey who was an American critical Thinker and Philosopher puts it *"We do not learn from experience, we learn from reflecting on experience"*.

This joint conference therefore, provides you with an opportunity to analyse, appraise and debate implications that have led to decayed environment under which diseases such as cholera have thrived. Let us grow our cities, municipalities, towns and communities

sustainably by taking immediate steps to ensure that waste of any kind is eliminated as prevention is better than cure. Accordingly, let me implore all Local Authorities to mainstream environmental management in your daily operations as a matter of priority. In doing this, each local authorities should develop and implement an environmental management implementation plan in consultation with local stakeholders based on prevailing local conditions. Similarly, all government ministries and departments charged with the duty to ensure a sustainable Zambian environment should work closely with local authorities in this area. Mr. President I and the Nation want to see clean and green communities, towns, municipalities and cities. It is doable the Men and Women in Uniform have shown us that it is possible to make cities, municipalities, towns and communities clean. We commend them for this.

Mr. President, therefore, challenge is on the Local Authorities and their residents to sustain and replicate the cleanliness in the areas under their jurisdiction. Hence, it is my hope that the next time the Association convenes this conference, its members the Local Authorities representatives would be proud as coming from clean and green communities, towns, municipalities and cities. It is the Government and people's aspiration that Local Authorities restore the old days and glory in which certain Towns like Chingola in the Copperbelt Province could stand proud as the cleanest Town in Zambia. Local Authorities need to reflect and learn from the Institutional and Town memory to establish what made that town in the status it used to be in order to improve to restore and transform their areas into clean and green Communities, Towns, Municipalities and Cities while embracing latest innovations and best practices in environmental management. Cleanliness can be restored in our cities with discipline starting at individual to society levels as cleanliness is next Godliness.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Indeed, the Local Government has a key role to play in the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals because most, if not all the **17** Goals are local. In this regard, the Seven National Development Plan has localized the Sustainable Development Goals so

that collectively we can achieve the targets set – forth in this global developmental agenda for improved living standard of our people. Therefore, it is inevitable that Local Authorities explore ways and means to enhance the localization of Sustainable Development Goals and translate the Seven National Development Plan into big results at the local level so that no one is left behind, with technical support from the Ministry of National Development Planning in the respective Provinces. As government we will continue to support Local Authorities financially through government subventions such as the Local Government Equalisation Fund and others as well as encourage and support innovative ways of raising resources locally.

Mr. President, my Regime is committed to ensuring that our goal on decentralization is achieved as soon as possible. I am aware that several Ministries have completed the Sector Devolution Plans and are implementing them while some are still developing these plans. I desire to see those Ministries that have developed and are implementing the sector devolution plans to move fast in implementing these plans while those Ministries which are still developing the plans should also up the game and finalise the development of the Sector Devolution Plans preferably by the first half of this year and that this exercise should be undertaken in liaison with receiving Local Authorities so that they are aware and made ready to receive devolved functions. Further, since we are all subject to public scrutiny in all our deeds, there is need for Sector Devolution Plans to be made public. This is necessary in ensuring that devolved functions go with matching resources and to provide for public accountability. You may wish to know that as part of my Government's commitment this year **2018**, funds for devolved functions under the Ministry of Agriculture have started going to Provinces and it is anticipated that next year we will continue with fiscal decentralization. However, let me mention that the Government and the people expect highest standard of prudence in the management and utilization of public funds by all Local Authorities as this is a fundamental precondition for our Nation to attain our desired level of development and up lift the living standard of our people.

Mr. President, Local Government requires a transformative leadership which is optimistic and upbeat in dealing with all aspects of local governance. In this regard, government is conscious of the need to have a local leadership that is enthusiastic and motivated. Therefore, having given yourselves to serve your residents through the election into the Local Government Leadership, I challenge you to focus and put service to your residents first in order for you to leave a legacy in your communities. This will ensure that you do not lose sight of your primary leadership role of ensuring that your respective Local Authorities deliver vital public services that will enhance opportunities for social and economic development at the local level and make a positive impact on the quality of life of our citizens you are called to serve. In all that you do, you should always be conscious of the purpose why you are placed in positions of leadership which is all about serving the citizens honestly, trustworthy and diligently. In all that we do collectively as Leaders, we should remember that it is service to the people of Zambia which matter the most above all else. As Stephen R. Covey renowned American International Leadership Consultant and Mentor puts it this way "*organisations are established to serve human needs and service is the rent we pay for living in the world of ours*". Thereby putting service above self. Hopefully, this will gradually transform us into the Age of Wisdom, when information and knowledge are impregnated with purpose, principles and values in our Nation Zambia on the path to greatness.

Ladies and Gentlemen

As I conclude once more I call upon you all to reflect on the strategies that would strengthen Local Leadership to localize Sustainable Development Goals for creation of synergies for clean and green environment in our Towns, Municipalities and Cities to accelerate the attainment of human, Socio-economic and Sustainable Development Goals **(SDGs)** at the Local level. We need to boost our local government, decentralisation and development at the grass roots, as well as, transform our districts into Smart Clean and Green Cities by taking advantage of the enabling environment and leveraging on

Information, Communication and Technology (**ICT**) in order to achieve better results and improve living standards of the people of Zambia.

It is now my honour and privilege to officially open this Joint **62nd** Annual Conference of the Local Government Association of Zambia (**LGAZ**) and the **15th** General Assembly of the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders' Initiatives for Community Action on Aids at the Local Level (**AMICAALL**).

I thank you and May God Bless You.