



**REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA**  
**Office of the Vice President**

**STATEMENT BY W. K. MULUBISHA-PERMANENT SECRETARY**

**LEADER OF THE ZAMBIAN DELEGATION TO THE WORLD CONFERENCE  
ON DISASTER REDUCTION, HYOGO, KOBE, JAPAN – 18<sup>TH</sup> – 22<sup>ND</sup> JANUARY  
2005**

Mr. Chairman,

May I, on behalf of the Government and the Zambian people convey through you, our heart-felt condolences to the Indian Ocean States for the loss of their citizens in the devastating Tsunami disaster that struck Asia on 26<sup>th</sup> December 2004.

We share deep sympathy and compassion for the Tsunami victims.

The Zambian delegation Mr. Chairman wishes to thank the UN/ISDR Secretariat, for successfully convening the World Conference on Disaster Reduction.

This Conference Mr. Chairman will remain in the memories of human race for the centuries to come, as it is being held in the aftermath of one of if not the most devastating disaster in modern history apart from HIV/AIDS.

The delegation wishes to extend its gratitude to the Government of Japan for hosting the conference, in this great city of Kobe.

Mr. Chairman, although Zambia has not experienced a calamity of a scale of the one that has hit the Asian region, she has had her share of disasters.

These disasters are triggered by interface between a number of hazards on one hand and the high degree of vulnerability faced by most of our communities on the other.

The hazards range from natural to those induced by human activity in the pursuit to satisfy insatiable appetite for power and accumulation of wealth.

The hazards prevalent in Zambia Mr. Chairman include droughts, floods, refugee influx, industrial Accidents, pest infestation, HIV and AIDS pandemic and road traffic accidents to name a few.

The high degree of vulnerability among our Zambian Communities arise from, persistent food insecurity, high levels of unemployment,

lack of decent shelter, access to clean water, medical care, power structures, and poor performance of the economy in general.

Some of these vices Mr. Chairman are off shoots of abject poverty while others are the very causes of poverty.

In order to promote a culture of disaster risk reduction, Zambia working with Co-operating partners through National Fora such as Disaster Management Consultative Forum (DMCF) and vulnerability Assessment Committee (VAC) has taken a number of steps. These steps are aimed at addressing the issues of Vulnerability or management of the hazards.

The main ones of these Mr. Chairman include:

- The establishment of Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit (DMMU). This department, which is located in the office of the Vice President acts as a mechanism for the co-ordination of activities and a clearing house of information relating to disaster management. It is also the Secretariat for the National Disaster Management Structure.
- Emergency operations Centre (EOC) has been constructed and the Government is now mobilising resources to equip it with appropriate facilities.
- Disaster Management and Mitigation Policy document and legal framework are in their final stages of adoption and enactment respectively.
- Disaster Management has been institutionalised through the establishment of a disaster management centre within the National College for Management and Development Studies.
- Rehabilitation of agricultural production through the following interventions:
  - (a) Distribution of Food Security Packs to vulnerable but viable farmers.

- (b) Seed multiplication, and distribution of improved seed and planting materials.
- (c) Construction of community storage sheds in the selected parts of the country
- (d) Establishment of seed banks at community levels
- (e) Introduction of Winter Cropping in the selected areas of the country
- (f) Encouragement of small-scale irrigation schemes country wide and drilling of boreholes (especially in the Southern half of the country which is prone to drought), rehabilitation and construction of dams and weirs.
- (g) Combating of livestock diseases through animal vaccination and rehabilitation and construction of dip tanks
- (h) Introduction of micro-financing schemes for small scale farmers

Mr. Chairman,

Zambia is currently pursuing water sector reforms, which will aim at establishing a comprehensive legal and institutional framework that will ensure equitable distribution of the water resource.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Zambia along with other southern African countries currently faces a major disaster of unprecedented magnitude.

I would like to re-emphasize the need for human race to be decisive and make more vigorous effort to tackle the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

It is for this reason that Zambia has taken a number of measures to mitigate the effects of HIV/AIDS. These include:

- Declaration of HIV/AIDS pandemic a national disaster.
- Establishment of the National Aids Council to Coordinate all activities relating to HIV/AIDS.

- Provision of Home based care for HIV/AIDS patients.

Mr. Chairman, though the above measures taken by Government to contribute to disaster risk reduction are paying off, there are a number of challenges that the country faces. Some of these are:

- Establishment of early Warning Systems and Capabilities that are responsive to the needs of vulnerable communities.
- Provision of adequate resources (human and material), to establish and strengthen research activities especially those related to climatic variations.
- Effective horizontal and vertical coordination especially during emergencies poses a big challenge.
- Improvement of hydrological and meteorological products for their effective contribution to natural disaster reduction is another area of concern.
- Capacities in the development of community based preparedness and contingency plans for handling of emergencies is our other area of deficiency.
- Other challenges are;  
Employment creation, increasing the number of patients to access Anti Retroviral Treatment (ART) and strengthening of capacities for home based care centres

Mr. Chairman,

In light of the fore-going challenges, Zambia invites her co-operating partners, in both Public and Private Sectors, including investors to help us establish an early warning system that is responsive to the needs of the country, and indeed a disaster management arrangement flexible enough to anticipate and act in a manner that seeks to minimise the loss of life, damage to property and the environment.

Emphasizing the need for increased investment for countries towards disaster risk reduction, we appeal to donor countries and other

development partners to consider debt cancellation for highly indebted developing countries in order for us to re-channel such resources into disaster risk reduction under existing Poverty Reduction Action frameworks as these frameworks are robust enough to provide the necessary transparency and accountability.

Finally Mr Chairman, allow me ones more on behalf of my delegation to register our gratitude to the Japanese people and their Government for their generous hospitality accorded to all of us from the day we entered their lovely country. Their hospitality is amazing and second to none

I thank you.