



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

**MAIN STATEMENT TO THE 76TH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE HIGH
COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME (EXCOM)**

**MR. DICKSON MATEMBO, PERMANENT SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS
AND INTERNAL SECURITY, ZAMBIA.**

GENEVA, OCTOBER, 2025

**DISTINGUISHED CHAIRPERSON, HIGH COMMISSIONER, EXCELLENCES,
DISTIGUSISHED DELEGATES.**

ZAMBIA ALIGNS ITSELF WITH THE STATEMENT DELIVERED BY THE DISTINGUISHED HONOURABLE MINISTER FROM COTE D'IVOIRE ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP. IT IS MY PROFOUND HONOUR TO ADDRESS THIS MEETING AT THE 76TH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME. ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA, ALLOW ME TO EXPRESS OUR DEEP GRATITUDE TO UNHCR FOR ITS TIRELESS COMMITMENT AND DEDICATION TO PROTECTING, SAFEGUARDING AND ASSISTING REFUGEES AND OTHER PERSONS OF CONCERN ACROSS THE GLOBE.

ALLOW ME CHAIRPERSON TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO THANK HIS EXCELLENCY MR. FILLIPO GRANDI FOR HIS DISTINGUISHED SERVICE IN SUPPORTING REFUGEES AND RESTORING HOPE FOR THOSE WHO HAVE LOST EVERYTHING. HIGH COMMISSIONER YOUR WORK AT UNHCR HAS BEEN A BEACON OF SOLIDARITY AND A REMINDER OF OUR SHARED HUMANITY.

YOUR EXCELLENCES

ON 30TH SEPTEMBER, 2025, ZAMBIA OFFICIALLY LAUNCHED THE ZAMBIA REFUGEE AND HOST COMMUNITIES PROJECT (ZRHCP) WHICH IS BEING FINANCED BY A WORLD BANK GRANT AT A TOTAL COST OF US\$30 MILLION. THE LAUNCH WAS GRACED BY THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS AND INTERNAL SECURITY WHO IS IN CHARGE OF REFUGEE PROTECTION. THE PROJECT AIMS TO IMPROVE THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC INCLUSION OF REFUGEES, FORMER REFUGEES AND THE HOST COMMUNITY BY ENHANCING ACCESS TO ESSENTIAL SERVICES, LEGAL REFORMS, IMPROVED INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES. THE WORLD BANK GRANT WILL SEE ZAMBIA FULFILLING SOME OF ITS PLEDGES MADE DURING THE 2023 GLOBAL REFUGEE FORUM.

DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES

ZAMBIA HAS BEGUN CONDUCTING COUNTRYWIDE SENSITISATIONS ON THE FIRST EVER NATIONAL REFUGEE POLICY LAUNCHED IN 2024, THIS IS WITH THE HOPE THAT MORE INSTITUTIONS AS LISTED IN THE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN WILL UNDERSTAND THE PLIGHT OF REFUGEES AND HOW THEY CAN BE ASSISTED IN ORDER TO BETTER THEIR FUTURE. THE POLICY HAS CATALYSED WIDE-RANGING INITIATIVES, FROM AGRICULTURAL TRAINING AND AGRIBUSINESS. IN ADDITION,

REFUGEE YOUTH ARE BEING GIVEN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES NOT ONLY TO BUILD RESILIENCE BUT TO SHOWCASE THEIR TALENT SIDE BY SIDE WITH THEIR ZAMBIAN PEERS THROUGH SPORTS SUCH AS FOOTBALL, JUDO AND BOXING. THIS HAS LED TO STRENGTHENED SOCIAL COHESION BETWEEN REFUGEES AND HOST COMMUNITIES.

BUILDING ON THIS, ZAMBIA HAS INITIATED LEGISLATIVE REFORMS AND EFFORTS TO INCLUDE REFUGEES IN NATIONAL DIGITAL IDENTITY SYSTEMS AND ENHANCING LEGAL PROTECTION. THIS UNDERSCORES ZAMBIA'S DETERMINATION TO BUILD A RIGHTS-BASED, FORWARD-LOOKING SYSTEM OF PROTECTION.

YOUR EXCELLENCES

IN THE SECOND QUARTER OF 2025, THE GOVERNMENT AND UNHCR SIGNED A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING TO CARRY OUT A FORCED DISPLACEMENT SURVEY TO STRENGTHEN EVIDENCE-BASED PLANNING FOR THE PERSONS OF CONCERN AND THE HOST COMMUNITY WHICH WILL INCLUDE EDUCATION AND HEALTH SERVICES BEING EXPANDED.

I WISH TO REPORT TO THIS PLENARY SESSION, PHASE TWO OF THE HOPE PROJECT TO SUPPORT FORMER REFUGEES IN THE MEHEBA AND MAYUKWAYUKWA LOCAL INTEGRATION SCHEMES WAS LAUNCHED IN JULY, 2025. THIS PROJECT WILL SEE THE IMPROVEMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE SCHEMES AND IS BEING SUPPORTED BY JICA AND UNDP AT A TOTAL COST OF \$5.9 MILLION DOLLARS.

THROUGH ZAMBIA'S CONTINUED INCLUSION, IMPORTANTLY, REFUGEES ARE NOW FORMALLY RECOGNIZED IN OUR EIGHTH NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN, A HISTORIC ACHIEVEMENT. THIS INCLUSION ENSURES THAT NO ONE IS LEFT BEHIND, REGARDLESS OF STATUS, AND CEMENTS ZAMBIA'S COMMITMENT TO INCLUSIVE GROWTH.

DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES,

THIS PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE POSSIBLE THROUGH THE STEADFAST SUPPORT OF UNHCR, THE WORLD BANK, UN AGENCIES, CIVIL SOCIETY, AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT PARTNERS, WORKING TOGETHER TO CREATE INCLUSIVE SOLUTIONS FOR REFUGEES AND HOST COMMUNITIES. HOWEVER, ZAMBIA'S REFUGEE RESPONSE FACES SERIOUS FINANCIAL CHALLENGES, RISKING THE LOSS OF THESE GAINS. WE CALL ON UNHCR AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO SUSTAIN AND INCREASE THEIR SUPPORT, TO ENABLE ZAMBIA TO UPHOLD ITS

COMMITMENT TO PROTECTION, DIGNITY, AND DEVELOPMENT FOR ALL, IN THE SPIRIT OF UPHOLDING ITS COMMITMENTS, HOSPITALITY AND SOLIDARITY.

THE CLOSURE OF THE REGIONAL BUREAU WOULD HAVE NEGATIVE EFFECTS IN THE SOUTHERN REGION. AS YOU MAY BE AWARE CHAIRPERSON REFUGEE MOVEMENT IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF AFRICA IS UNIQUE, AND THEREFORE DESERVES TO HAVE A DEDICATED OFFICE IN THE REGION. THIS CLOSURE WILL THEREFORE AFFECT THE DIRECT OVERSIGHT AND COORDINATION OF REFUGEE PROTECTION AND ASSISTANCE ACROSS THE REGION.

YOUR EXCELLENCES,

IN CONCLUSION, ZAMBIA REAFFIRMS ITS STRONG COMMITMENT TO PROTECTING, INCLUDING, AND EMPOWERING REFUGEES. THE COUNTRY IS READY TO INNOVATE, COLLABORATE, AND LEAD BY EXAMPLE TO TURN PROMISES INTO ACTION, TRANSFORMING CHALLENGES INTO OPPORTUNITIES. TOGETHER, WE CAN BUILD A FUTURE WHERE EVERY REFUGEE, HOST COMMUNITY MEMBER, AND INDIVIDUAL ENJOYS DIGNITY, PROTECTION, AND HOPE. THROUGH SHARED RESOLVE AND COLLECTIVE EFFORT, WE CAN CREATE AN INCLUSIVE, RESILIENT, AND JUST WORLD.

I THANK YOU.