

OPENING SPEECH BY
HONOURABLE DR. EUSTARCKIO KAZONGA, MP
MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND HOUSING
DELIVERED AT THE WORKSHOP ON
"HORTICULTURAL MARKETS DEVELOPMENT"
HOSTED BY THE
AGRICULTURAL CONSULTATIVE FORUM
AND
FOOD SECURITY RESEARCH PROJECT
ON 2ND JULY 2010 AT THE PAMODZI HOTEL, LUSAKA

MR. CHAIRMAN,
DISTINGUISHED GUESTS,
PARTICIPANTS,
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

IT IS MY PLEASURE TO OFFICIATE AT THIS VERY IMPORTANT WORKSHOP WHICH IS MEANT TO HIGHLIGHT IMPORTANT EMPIRICAL INFORMATION ABOUT HORTICULTURAL MARKETS IN ZAMBIA CONSIDERING THE IMPORTANT ROLE THAT HORTICULTURE PLAYS IN RURAL INCOME GENERATION AS WELL AS URBAN DIETS.

MR. CHAIRMAN, GOVERNMENT HAS ALWAYS REGARDED THIS SECTOR AS A HIGHLY PROMISING NON-TRADITIONAL EXPORT SECTOR AND HAS PUT IN PLACE POLICIES THAT CONTINUE TO FACILITATE ITS GROWTH.

MR. CHAIRMAN, WHILE MUCH IS KNOWN ABOUT THE SUCCESSES AND FAILURES OF ZAMBIA'S EXPORT HORTICULTURE SYSTEM, MUCH LESS IS KNOWN ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE OF THE DOMESTIC HORTICULTURE SYSTEM. YET WE DO KNOW THAT THIS SYSTEM IS MUCH LARGER AND INVOLVES MORE PEOPLE. WHILE ONLY A FEW MEDIUM AND LARGE SCALE FARMERS ARE INVOLVED IN EXPORT HORTICULTURE, NATIONWIDE SURVEYS CONDUCTED BY THE CENTRAL STATISTICAL OFFICE SHOW THAT ABOUT 20% OF THE SMALL AND MEDIUM SCALE FARMERS (300,000 HOUSEHOLDS) IN ZAMBIA SELL HORTICULTURAL PRODUCTS IN OUR MARKETS.

OUR LOCAL AUTHORITIES HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY IN DEVELOPING MARKET AND MARKET INFRASTRUCTURE FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE AMONG OTHERS. THEY ARE ALSO RESPONSIBLE FOR COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL OF GARBAGE, PROVISION OF SANITARY FACILITIES AND LAND ALLOCATION FOR MARKETING FACILITIES WITHIN THE OVERALL FRAMEWORK OF INTERGRATED DEVELOPMENT PLAN (IDP).

I AM RELIABLY INFORMED MR. CHAIRMAN THAT URBAN CONSUMERS IN ZAMBIA LARGELY ACCESS THEIR FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES FROM THE TRADITIONAL MARKETS ACCOUNTING TO OVER 90% OF THE MARKET SHARE. THIS MEANS THAT SUPERMARKETS LIKE SHOPRITE, SPAR, ETC ACCOUNT FOR LESS THAN 10% THOUGH, I HASTEN TO SAY, THESE WILL CONTINUE TO GROW.

MR. CHAIRMAN, WHOLESAL MARKET ARE AN ESSENTIAL COMPONENT OF ANY AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SYSTEM ESPECIALLY FOR HORTICULTURAL CROPS. IN MOST COUNTRIES WHOLESAL MARKET REMAIN AN ESSENTIAL LINK BETWEEN PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION FACILITATING BOTH PRODUCERS AND CONSUMERS EFFECTIVE ACCESS TO MARKETS AND THUS INCREASING PRODUCER INCOMES AS WELL AS AVAILING GOOD QUALITY PRODUCE AT COMPETITIVE PRICES FOR CONSUMERS.

MR. CHAIRMAN, GOVERNMENT REALISES THAT MAINTAINING EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT WHOLESALING LINKAGES IN FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION IS A VERY SERIOUS CHALLENGE IN URBAN AREAS. THIS IS BECAUSE THE VERY RAPID AND CONCENTRATED POPULATION GROWTH HAS BEEN CREATING AN OVER SWELLING DEMAND FOR FOOD. GOVERNMENT HAS THEREFORE COME UP WITH THE URBAN MARKET DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UMDP). UNDER THIS PROGRAMME, THE FOLLOWING MARKET HAVE BEEN CONSTRUCTED: IN LUSAKA, NEW SOWETO MARKET, CHILENJE MARKET, CHELSTONE MARKET, KITWE (BUCHI-KAMITONDO, NAKADOLI AND NDEKE MARKET) AND NDOLA (CHISOKONE AND NDEKE MARKET).

MR. CHAIRMAN, URBAN MARKET ARE THE PLACES IN ZAMBIA WHERE THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE POPULATION BUY GOODS AND SERVICES FROM MARKETERS, TRADERS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS. THE LATTER GROUP, BY AND LARGE, REALISE A REASONABLE, AND A

SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER, A GOOD INCOME. MARKETS FORM A KEY LOCATION FOR GRZ TO TARGET POVERTY REDUCTION AND COMMUNICATE WITH ITS CITIZENS ABOUT ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS.

GOVERNMENT IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE DEPLORABLE STATE OF THE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES WHOLESAL MARKET IN URBAN MARKETS SUCH AS SOWETO. I AM PLEASED TO MENTION HERE THAT IN THIS VEIN, MY GOVERNMENT IS WILLING TO WORK WITH ALL STAKEHOLDERS TO FIND SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS FACING THIS FRUITS AND VEGETABLES WHOLESAL MARKET ESPECIALLY THROUGH THE PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP (PPP) ARRANGEMENT. THE LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS ARE ALREADY IN PLACE TO SUPPORT THIS. PPP POLICY IS IN PLACE AND THE MARKETS AND BUS STATIONS ACT ALSO PROVIDES THIS AS IT ALLOWS LOCAL AUTHORITIES TO ENTER IN PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS IN ESTABLISHING MARKETS.

IT IS PRUDENT THAT A SITE IS IDENTIFIED WHERE A PURPOSELY DESIGNED AND DEVELOPED HORTICULTURAL WHOLESAL MARKET CAN BE ESTABLISHED. THIS DEVELOPMENT SHOULD NOT ONLY BE CONFINED TO LUSAKA BUT TO ALL MAJOR TOWNS AND CITIES IN ZAMBIA WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE URBAN MARKETS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME THAT GOVERNMENT IS CURRENTLY IMPLEMENTING THROUGH MY MINISTRY.

THIS DEVELOPMENT HOWEVER, MR. CHAIRMAN, CALLS FOR MUCH MORE THAN PUTTING UP INFRASTRUCTURE AS HAS BEEN TRADITIONALLY THE CASE. IT CALLS FOR A NEW APPROACH FEATURING MORE ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THESE MARKETS. I AM GLAD THAT MY GOVERNMENT RECENTLY ENACTED THE PRIVATE PUBLIC PARTNERSHIP ACT WHICH ALLOWS AND PROVIDES GUIDELINES FOR SUCH ENGAGEMENT.

MR. CHAIRMAN, IT IS MY SINCERE HOPE THAT DELIBERATIONS FROM THIS WORKSHOP WILL SIGNIFICANTLY TRIGGER MORE STAKEHOLDER INTEREST AND ENGAGEMENT IN THE SECTOR AND ULTIMATELY LEAD TO ITS LONG OVER DUE DEVELOPMENT. MY MINISTRY IS READY TO WORK WITH YOU IN DEVELOPING HORTICULTURAL PRODUCE MARKETS.

WITH THESE FEW REMARKS, IT IS NOW MY HONOUR AND PLEASURE TO DECLARE THIS WORKSHOP OFFICIALLY OPEN.

I THANK YOU AND GOD BLESS YOU ALL.