



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

**SPEECH BY MADAM THANDIWE BANDA, FIRST
LADY OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA, AT THE
HABITAT FOR HUMANITY ZAMBIA “PRESTIGIOUS
WOMEN BUILD” EVENT IN CHAZANGA TOWNSHIP
ON 22ND OCTOBER, 2010**

- MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS;
- CABINET AND DEPUTY MINISTERS' SPOUSES PRESENT;
- HABITAT FOR HUMANITY ZAMBIA BOARD CHAIRPERSON-- MRS MARY KAZUNGA;
- NATIONAL DIRECTOR-- HABITAT FOR HUMANITY ZAMBIA;
- FELLOW 2010 WOMEN-BUILD AMBASSADORS;
- THE LOCAL COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND RESIDENTS;
- DISTINGUISHED INVITED GUESTS;
- MEMBERS OF THE PRESS;
- LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

IT IS WITH GREAT PLEASURE AND PRIDE THAT I OFFICIATE AT THIS IMPORTANT OCCASION OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF A HOUSE FOR MS MARGARET NANGUMA AND HER FAMILY BY HABITAT FOR HUMANITY ZAMBIA. IN ZAMBIA, AND INDEED AFRICA AS A WHOLE, POVERTY BEARS A WOMAN'S FACE.

WOMEN ARE AFFECTED BY ECONOMIC, SOCIAL OR HEALTH CRISES WHILE CHILDREN ARE AFFECTED EVEN MORE.

THE CYCLE OF POVERTY CAN BE UNENDING FOR WOMEN AND THEIR CHILDREN WHEN THEY HAVE FEW RESOURCES OR OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADVANCEMENT.

THIS IS WHAT MY OFFICE STANDS FOR; TO SPEAK FOR THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

WITHOUT DOUBT, WHAT BETTER TIME TO BE A PART OF THIS EVENT THAN IN THE MONTH OF OCTOBER WHEN WE CELEBRATE OUR NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE DAY?

TODAY, AS A RESPONSE TO CONTRIBUTING TO WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND THE FIGHT AGAINST POVERTY, HOUSING MARGARET AND HER FAMILY WILL ACCORD HER FREEDOM.

THIS FREEDOM FROM HOMELESSNESS WILL GIVE HER THE OPPORTUNITY TO ESCAPE THE WORST EFFECTS OF POVERTY AND BE EMPOWERED TO TAKE CONTROL OF HER SITUATION.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY BUILDS AND REPAIRS HOMES AND, THROUGH THIS, THEY BUILD AND REPAIR COMMUNITIES.

THEY CREATE PLACES FOR FAMILIES TO BE SAFE, SECURE AND TOGETHER; PLACES FOR FAMILIES TO BE FREE OF THE CONSTANT WORRIES THAT SHADOW LIFE WHEN YOU HAVE TO SURVIVE IN SUB-STANDARD HOUSING.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

AS WOMEN-BUILD AMBASSADOR FOR HABITAT FOR HUMANITY ZAMBIA, I BELIEVE THIS EVENT IS A PERFECT WAY OF HIGHLIGHTING HABITAT'S EFFORTS IN ADDRESSING THE IMMEDIATE NEEDS FOR SHELTER AND HELPING TO PROTECT WOMEN AND CHILDREN FROM PROPERTY-GRABBING.

THIS IS A WAY OF BRINGING ABOUT AWARENESS TO THE PLIGHT OF ORPHANED AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN IN ZAMBIA AND THEIR NEED FOR DECENT HOUSING.

THE EIGHT MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS WERE DEVELOPED DURING THE 2000 UNITED NATIONS MILLENNIUM SUMMIT IN THE HOPE OF ENDING EXTREME WORLD POVERTY BY THE YEAR 2015.

AS A NATION, ZAMBIA HAS COMMITTED ITSELF TO ACHIEVING THESE GOALS AND IS ALSO A SIGNATORY TO THE UNIVERSAL HUMAN RIGHTS DECLARATION THAT RECOGNISES HOUSING AS A BASIC HUMAN NEED.

THE ZAMBIAN GOVERNMENT HAS STATED THAT HOUSING IS A BASIC HUMAN RIGHT AND THAT EVERY MAN, WOMAN AND CHILD DESERVES ACCESS TO DECENT SHELTER.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I BELIEVE SHELTER PLAYS A CRITICAL ROLE NOT ONLY IN THE HEALTH OF INDIVIDUAL FAMILIES BUT ALSO IN THE WELL-BEING OF COMMUNITIES.

A LACK OF HOUSING AND ACCESS TO LAND FOR LOW-INCOME COMMUNITIES MEANS INCREASED VULNERABILITY TO POVERTY, SOCIAL INSTABILITY, DISEASE AND DEATH.

WHEN LOW-INCOME COMMUNITIES LACK THE LEGAL RIGHTS TO OWN OR CONTROL PROPERTY, THEY LACK ACCESS TO WEALTH AND, THEREFORE, ENJOY NEITHER PERSONAL NOR ECONOMIC AUTONOMY.

AS YOU MAY BE AWARE, IT IS THE POLICY OF THE ZAMBIAN GOVERNMENT TO ALLEVIATE EXTREME POVERTY AMONG THE ZAMBIAN PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY THE VULNERABLE AND MARGINALISED COMMUNITIES THROUGH, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THE PROVISION OF DECENT HOUSING.

THIS WILL GUARANTEE PERSONAL SECURITY AND THE WELL-BEING OF THE AFFECTED PEOPLE, THEREBY ENABLING THEM TO HAVE PEACE OF MIND TO ENGAGE IN PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES.

VULNERABLE PEOPLE SUCH AS FAMILIES CARING FOR ORPHANED AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN NEED TO BE SUPPORTED AND APPRECIATED. THEY, TOO, ARE A PART OF THE ZAMBIAN POPULACE.

IT IS INDEED GRATIFYING TO NOTE THAT HABITAT FOR HUMANITY IS WORKING TOWARDS UPLIFTING THE STANDARDS OF LIVING OF THE POOR AND VULNERABLE PEOPLE THROUGH THE ALLEVIATION OF POVERTY HOUSING.

HABITAT HAS BEEN BUILDING PROJECTS IN A NUMBER OF PROVINCES IN ZAMBIA, INCLUDING LUSAKA, THE COPPERBELT, CENTRAL AND WESTERN PROVINCES, COVERING BOTH PERI-URBAN AND RURAL AREAS.

THE ORGANISATION HAS SO FAR BUILT OVER 2,100 HOUSES. THIS, INDEED, IS A POSITIVE STRIDE AND COMPLEMENTS GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS OF REDUCING EXTREME POVERTY AND MOVING TOWARDS THE ATTAINMENT OF THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND THE VISION 2015.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY ZAMBIA ALSO CONTINUES TO SHOW LEADERSHIP AND HAS SET THE STANDARD THAT WE SHOULD ALL STRIVE TOWARDS. IT IS A CHALLENGE FOR ALL THE PEOPLE OF ZAMBIA.

I WISH TO CALL UPON INDIVIDUALS, BUSINESS HOUSES, NGOS AND DONORS TO TAKE UP THE CHALLENGE OF DEVELOPING AND ENRICHING PARTNERSHIPS WITH

HABITAT THROUGH FINANCIAL, MATERIAL OR VOLUNTEER SUPPORT FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF MORE HOUSES TO REACH MORE PEOPLE IN NEED.

TO MARGARET AND HER FAMILY, WHOSE HOUSE IS BEING CONSTRUCTED TODAY, I URGE YOU TO FAITHFULLY LOOK AFTER THE HOUSE SO AS TO ENCOURAGE FURTHER SUPPORT FROM HABITAT FOR OTHER PEOPLE IN NEED.

THAT WAY, OTHER WELL-WISHERS WILL ALSO FEEL ENCOURAGED TO SUPPORT THE CONSTRUCTION OF MORE HOUSES.

I BELIEVE THE TURNING POINT OF ANY SOCIETY OR COMMUNITY IS THE DESIRE BY COMMITTED PERSONS IN THE TO UPGRADE THE LIVING STANDARDS OF THOSE LOOKED DOWN UPON. THE WORK OF HABITAT IS ADEQUATELY ADDRESSING THIS POINT.

I AM PROUD TO BE HERE THIS MORNING. IT IS INDEED AN HONOUR FOR ME TO KICK-START THIS IMPORTANT EVENT WHICH WILL CHANGE THE LIVES OF MARGARET AND HER FAMILY.

LET VOLUNTEERISM AND SELFLESSNESS BE THE VANGUARD OF ADDRESSING HOMELESSNESS IN ZAMBIA. LASTLY, MY APPEAL GOES TO THE CORPORATE WORLD. HABITAT FOR HUMANITY HAS IN THE LAST FINANCIAL YEAR BUILT OVER 280 HOMES FOR ORPHANED AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND, AS PART OF THEIR STRATEGIC PLAN, INTEND TO BUILD 80 HOMES NEXT YEAR.

I URGE YOU TO MAKE A DONATION AND HELP BUILD TOMORROW TODAY. I THANK YOU ALL.