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Republic of Zambia

**STATEMENT FOR POSSIBLE USE BY HIS HONOR THE VICE PRESIDENT
DR. GUY SCOTT AT THE US-AFRICA LEADERS SUMMIT, ON 6TH
AUGUST 2014, WASHINGTON D.C.**

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The United States has been a vital security and development partner for the African continent and U.S. Investment and assistance have played a very important role in helping Africa build a better future. On the hand, Africa's global influence and importance has become significant to the U.S. strategic national interests. Proactive engagement with Africa in securing peace and stability and promoting sustainable economic and social development are fundamental for enduring mutual benefits of both Africa and the United States. In this regard, Zambia is delighted to have this opportunity to participate at this first-ever U.S.-Africa Leaders' Summit.

Zambia considers the themes on the Agenda for the Summit, which are; Investing in Africa's Future; Peace and Security and Governing for the Next Generation, as most appropriate and good basis upon which to begin dialogue on developing a joint strategy for mutually beneficial cooperation between Africa and the United States of America.

At the outset, it is important to note that Africa hosts seven of ten fastest growing economies in the world, which include Zambia. This growth is however, not sufficient to lift the masses out of poverty. More still needs to be done to ensure more sustainable broad based growth. in this regard, Zambia joins other African countries in welcoming this new partnership initiative with the United States of America.

Zambia in partnership with other African other countries, has made strides in developing strategies for the economic integration of the continent. If Africa is to move forward as a continent and achieve prosperity, it is imperative that the continent begins to trade more with itself. Therefore, Zambia wishes to call upon the United States of America to work together and support African regional integration initiatives. Fundamental to achieving regional integration, the result of which would

be increased intra-Africa trade, is the development of regional infrastructure.

Zambia being a land-linked country has not benefited much from the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). Despite this, Zambia still wishes to join other African countries in calling for United States of America to extend this arrangement beyond 2015 when it is scheduled to expire. We believe that the inherent constraints that have hampered countries like Zambia from taking full advantage of this arrangement could be addressed in partnership with the U.S. Government. Further, we call upon the U.S. Government to encourage the private sector in the U.S. to invest in Zambia and other African countries to produce for export under the AGOA arrangement.

In addition, Zambia wishes to commend President Obama's Trade Africa Initiative and its contribution towards boosting intra-African trade. However, Zambia would like to see the expansion of this initiative beyond the East African Community to cover more countries on the Continent.

Food security has continued to be a great concern to most African countries and Zambia is no exception. While the country's economy is mining-based, Zambia has made major strides in diversifying and promoting other sectors including agriculture. It is a fact that more than 60% of Zambians earn their living through some form of agricultural activity, making this sector the most important if masses of people are to be lifted out of poverty.

In order to ensure sustainability and improve output and incomes in this sector, the Zambian government has been promoting investment in value addition. In this respect, investment in agro-processing is key to ensuring food security and lead to poverty reduction.

Zambia therefore, calls for enhanced cooperation with the US in the areas of agricultural research and development, training and re-training of extension officers and other professionals in this sector to improve productivity. The U.S. private sector can play a major role in supporting technological advancement and development of entrepreneurial skills and capacity in this sector which has the potential to impact positively on a wider number of people on the continent. It should be noted that Zambia is one of the few countries i Africa that still has excess land for agriculture production.

In terms of demographics, Africa has one of the youngest populations in the world with approximately 20% of its people between the ages of 15 and 24. This statistic is important in that it presents a significant potential human resource that is required for any nation to achieve sustainable development. However, this scenario also represents a huge challenge for African countries including Zambia. Millions of youths are entering the job market each year on the African continent, with available jobs far too small to absorb the numbers both in the public and private sectors.

In this regards, Zambia wishes to commend the United States Government for implementing the U.S. Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) as well as the new Washington Fellowship Programme. We wish to encourage the U.S. to enhance their support for programmes of empowerment of women and youths in Africa as well as the improvement of their entrepreneurial skills

With regard to peace and regional stability, political reforms through democracy and good governance have continued to steadily characterize the dispensation in many African countries. While we may have recorded these successes, recent years have seen many regions of the African continent, particularly, the Great Lakes and the Sahel Regions, witnessing a number of violent conflicts that have seriously hampered development, caused severe destruction, death of innocent civilians and internally

displacement persons across border, and led to regional instability.

As a result, we have seen how increasingly African Governments have taken responsibility for preventing conflict by undertaking peace building measures. for instance, the African Union has through its Peace and Security council made significant efforts in conflict resolution on the continents. The African Union has thus embarked on an ambitious journey of taking responsibility for the peace and security of the continent by developing continental security architecture and established the African Standby Force and engages in conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction. While, it is commendable for African to show this kind of ownership and responsibility, it is however, of paramount importance for the African Union to form strategic partnership with countries such as the United States in order to operationalise the African Union's security architecture on the ground.

The peace and security agenda in Africa seeks to address the root causes of conflict comprising, poverty, human rights abuses, unequal distribution of resources such as land and mineral wealth and the absence of the rule of law. This is imperative as this would provide a basis upon which strategies for peaceful resolution of conflict, prevention and intervention measures can be mapped.

In particular, i wish to draw your attention to the conflict situation in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. Conflict in DRC has regional dimensions because the people of the Great Lakes region are so interlinked socially, economically, culturally and linguistically that instability generated by internal causes in one country could quickly spread to create widespread conflicts in the entire region. For instance, persistence attacks on the civilian population in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo has caused massive displacements of persons fleeing conflicts internally

into neighboring countries and therefore, creating a growing humanitarian crisis in the region.

In addition, persistence cross border attacks have caused profound regional insecurity and have been a source of political destabilization for neighboring countries including Zambia. Zambia, as a core member of the International Conference on the great Lakes, a signatory to the PACT and the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, shall continue to actively participate in the DRC peace-process and is till keen to see Peace and security return to the DRC. in addition, recent conflicts in North Africa have further worsened the humanitarian and security situation on the African continent, as the governments of the Sahel region have had to content with arms proliferation as well as the influx of refugees including terrorist activities by Islamic extremists.

Since the early 70s countries of the Sahel Region, which runs from the Atlantic Ocean in the West to the Horn of Africa in the East, has continued to face severe food shortages caused by economic crisis, poverty, terrorism, desertification and climate change, transnational organised crime, arms and drug trafficking, which are undermining economic development as well as regional peace and stability.

In addressing the various challenges facing the Sahel region, there is need to ensure that an effective coordinated approach between the affected countries through cooperation with the Sahel States and other cooperating partners such as the African Union and the economic community of West African States (ECOWAS) in order to ensure that a comprehensive solution to a range of related threats of the region is found.

in recognition of the significant role that regional organizations such as the African Union play in conflict resolution and the fact that regional organizations are well positioned to understand conflicts situations, I

wish to call for greater African Union-united States cooperation in the area of conflict prevention, mediation, and peace keeping.

African is slowly but surely coming of age with regards to addressing African challenges with African solutions. Zambia will continue to play its historical role in this process.