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MINISTRY OF GREEN ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT

KEY NOTE STATEMENT FOR POSSIBLE USE BY

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MINISTER OF GREEN ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT**

**DURING THE HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT OF THE SIXTH SESSION OF
THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED
NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME**

TO BE HELD ON 29TH FEBRUARY, 2024

IN NAIROBI, KENYA

FEBRUARY 2024

- Your Excellency, Dr. William S. Ruto, President of the Republic of Kenya;
- Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Government Present;
- Your Excellency, the Representative of the United Nations Secretary General;
- Your Excellency, Ms. Leila Benali, President of the Sixth Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly;
- Fellow Ministers and Heads of Delegations;
- Your Excellency, Ms. Inger Andersen, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme;
- Distinguished Delegates;
- Ladies and Gentlemen.

On behalf of the Zambian delegation, let me express our profound gratitude to the Government and the people of Kenya for the warm hospitality we have been accorded since our arrival in Nairobi. My commendation also goes to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) for the excellent organisation of the Sixth Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-6).

Madam President,

It is a great honour for me to address the Sixth Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly being held under the theme **“Effective, Inclusive and Sustainable Multilateral actions to tackle Climate Change, Biodiversity loss and Pollution”**. This session is being held against the backdrop of global crises such as conflict and insecurity, high cost of living affecting the poorest and the most vulnerable communities, hunger and disease burden, and severe negative effects of climate change. As I speak, Madam President, my country Zambia is experiencing what is likely to be one of the worst droughts in our history.

Madam President

The latest special report prepared by UNEP for the High-level segment of the Sixth Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly reveals that tackling the triple planetary crises is increasingly becoming inconsequential to mankind as a result of geo-political conflicts, as well as hunger and disease burdens. In addition, the relationship between humanity and nature has broken down with human activities altering 75 percent of the land surface, 85 percent of wetlands and 66 percent of oceans. This is paradoxical because humanity is undermining the very foundation of our survival.

Madam President

To change the alarming findings of the UNEP special report, concerted efforts, leadership, and creativity are needed in the way we manage nature. In this regard, we must address the triple planetary crises and deliver transformative solutions in an effective, inclusive and sustainable manner. UNEA must, therefore, continue to be the beacon of hope, the global forum that will enable us to deal with the most pressing and emerging global environmental issues.

Madam President

Zambia is committed to be part of the global community championing actions that will address our environmental challenges. In view of this, we will work with the international community through established multilateral processes such as UNEA to deliver transformative environmental actions that will contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. We demonstrated our ability to partner with the global community to address environmental challenges when we led the African Group of Negotiators on Climate Change through the negotiations that culminated in the flagship COP28 outcome on the operationalization and capitalization of the fund and funding arrangements on loss and damage.

Madam President

At national level, Zambia has domesticated the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and is implementing actions that contribute to addressing the global environmental challenges. In this respect, Zambia is providing an enabling environment for green investments by, among others, mainstreaming green growth in the Eight National Development Plan with a dedicated pillar on environmental sustainability. Additionally, we have prepared a National Green Growth Strategy which is a blueprint for guiding Zambia to develop in a resilient, resource efficient, low carbon and socially inclusive manner. Further, my Government has developed Green Bonds Guidelines and Listing Rules, and Green Loans Guidelines. Indeed, I am glad to announce to UNEA 6 that these efforts have started bearing fruit with the debut issuance of a US\$200 million green bond by the Copperbelt Energy Corporation for generating an additional 200MW of renewable energy.

Madam President

On biodiversity, Zambia has aligned its Second National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan of 2015 to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) to ensure effective implementation of all 23 action-oriented global targets of the GBF. This will contribute effectively to protecting our biodiversity, ensuring its sustainable use and promoting fair and equitable benefit sharing.

On climate change, in November 2023, Zambia became only the 17th African country to submit its National Adaptation Plan (NAP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Secretariat. We are leveraging on our NAP to mobilize resources from both multilateral and bilateral sources and the private sector for the implementation of adaptation initiatives aimed at building the resilience of our physical and biological systems and the local communities to the adverse impacts of climate change.

Madam President

As I conclude, I wish to state that the world must continue to advance scientific knowledge, have strong political resolve and global engagement to deliver effective, inclusive and sustainable multilateral action that addresses the triple planetary crises. Let us unite to deliver on all commitments made to protect our planet by investing in nature and limiting the dangerous impacts of climate change and environmental degradation on livelihoods, people and our planet.

Madam President, I thank you