STATEMENT BY H.E. MS. MWABA PATRICIA KASESE-BOTA, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ZAMBIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS IN NEW YORK AND GLOBAL CHAIR OF THE GROUP OF LLDCS

At the High-Level Seminar: Accelerating Sustainable Energy for all in Landlocked Developing Countries through Innovative Partnerships

24-25 October 2016

• Mr. Martin Ledolter, Managing Director of the Austrian Development Agency
• Mr. Gyan Chandra Acharya, UN Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS
• Mr. Taizo Nishikawa, Deputy Director General of UNIDO
• Ms. Monika Weber-Fahr, Chief Operating Officer of Sustainable Energy for All
• Excellencies, Distinguished delegates and participants

It is my great honour to address this opening plenary session of the high-level seminar on accelerating sustainable energy for all in LLDCs through innovative partnerships.

Firstly I want to thank the Government of Austria and the United Nations Office of the High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, for co-organizing the meeting and supporting the participation of the LLDCs in collaboration with United Nations Industry Development Organization (UNIDO) and Sustainable Energy 4 All (SE4ALL).

Vienna is a historic city for the LLDC as our decade program of action is premised on this city. I therefore thank the Government of Austria for hosting us again in Vienna. This meeting on Sustainable Energy the first of its kind for LLDC is of
profound importance to us as a group, as energy is the mantra of our structural economic transformation towards enhancing our trade competitiveness.

Distinguished Delegates,

Two years ago, we gathered here for the Second UN Conference on Land Locked Developing Countries and adopted the ambitious Vienna Programme of Action for the LLDCs for the decade 2014-2024. The Vienna Programme of Action for the first time recognized the importance of energy infrastructure for the LLDCs.

The Vienna Programme of Action stresses that access to affordable, reliable and renewable energy and related technologies is critically important in not only modernizing information and communications technology and transit systems to reducing delays but also its vital importance in enhancing productive capacity of our countries to achieve sustained economic growth and sustainable development. The importance of the Sustainable Energy for All Initiative is also recognized in the Vienna Programme.

Last year, the UN Member States adopted a Global and transformative Agenda guiding sustainable development, of the International community for 15 years, that is “the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” with 17 Sustainable Development Goals, of which SDG 7, a stand alone and a universal goal is on energy, with targets on access, renewable, efficiency, and means of implementation. SDG 7 on Energy further makes special and specific reference to the LLDCs.
Excellencies,

The energy access for our countries remains very low. The average population access to electricity of 44% lags way behind the average for all developing countries which stands at 81%. We have been undertaking efforts to improve access to clean fuel and energy technologies. Yet, the share of population in our countries with access to these is only around 25 per cent, less than half of the world average. Our energy efficiency is also much lower than in developing countries as a whole.

Our countries hold great potential for the production of renewable energy, in particular that derived from hydropower, wind, sun and geothermal sources, yet energy investment in our countries continues to be low.

Our countries have for a long time now been totally depended on raw material exports such as the minerals and oil. The mono-commodity dependence has perpetuated the high poverty levels of our people. Our governments have embraced diversification and value addition which all have high Energy requirements.

Furthermore, The 2030 agenda goals are premised on adequate supply and access to clean energy by all, enough to meet the needs of every individual and sufficient to drive our individual national development aspirations.

Inadequate infrastructure is one challenge that continues to limit our capability to provide universal access of clean energy to all. The inadequate infrastructure, further limit the capacity for industrial growth and prohibits attainment of higher productive capacities for our countries.
Distinguished Delegates,

There is need for Governments to work together with all key stakeholders to create an enabling environment that promotes investment in renewable energies to meet the demand of access by all as well as drive our economic agenda towards the 2030 aspirations.

The need to revisit some of the long term Development Agreements on energy where Governments subsidies the multinational corporates is eminent and an urgent undertaking, as clearly these archaic development undertaking are not in any way promoting the energy industry but rather stifling Government’s capacities to attract the much needed investment in renewable energy.

The move to revisit the DAs and make them respond to the current geopolitical and development demands of the 2030 agenda should be supported by all development partners including the Bretton Woods Institutions, as clearly we will be left behind in energy development if we cannot invite new investments that break even and make profits on their energy investments.

Financing for renewable energy is vital if the LLDCs are to meet the energy obligation and satisfy both the home and industrial demand. Global partnerships on energy are therefore necessary and should be established to assist our countries meet the energy goal, which is also crucial to the attainment of the entire 2030 Agenda.

Our countries need to have in enabling policy frameworks, which define clear sustainable energy plans together with supporting policies.
Technology transfer is another important Means of implementation, which will further promote the establishment of the energy industry in our countries.

The need for technical and capacity-building assistance for our countries is phenomenal, and include education and training for developing national and local capacities to conceptualize, innovate, implement, as well as monitor the results of energy policies and programmes, and to develop optimal policy, regulatory and financial frameworks for energy service provision.

On behalf of the LLDC Group, I call on our development partners, the organizations of the United Nations system and other international organizations, international financing institutions and development banks and the private sector to enhance financial and technical assistance to landlocked developing countries for sustainable energy development. We further expect the private sector to live up to the united and collective endeavor of contributing to the attainment of the global Sustainable Development Goals by doing away with their development agreements, which are a hindrance to fair and robust investment in renewable energy. We must collective ensure that no one and no country remains behind in achieving the important goal of sustainable energy.

I wish to further call upon you all in this room to closely examine the needs of the LLDCs on sustainable energy. Landlocked Developing Countries because of their geography are also disproportionately affected by climate change, desertification, land degradation and drought and flooding including glacial melting. A large proportion of their land is under dryland ecosystems that are highly vulnerable to the impact of desertification and climate change. We need special support to harness renewable energy in these areas.
Distinguished Ladies and gentlemen,

As earlier stated, energy is particularly important for us to improve trade facilitation and to support our industrialization so that we can diversify and move away from commodity dependence. Being landlocked we are dependent on our neighbouring countries for transportation of fuel, when there is instability in the neighbouring country our fuel costs sky rocket. It is important therefore to come up with renewable forms of energy such as bio-fuels that can lessen our dependency on the neighbouring countries.

Distinguished delegates,

The LLDCs have areas of special needs on energy in addition to the basic social and economic needs that we need sustainable energy for. Of the three Groups of countries in special situations that – the Small Island Developing States, the Least Developing Countries and the Land-Locked Developing Countries, the other two groups were examined and have in place special packages/initiatives established based on the assessments. I challenge you all today to do the same thing with Land-locked group of countries and come up with a package or initiative that would address our needs.

I hope that this high-level seminar will provide the group with a outright assessment of our unique needs and offer innovative and practical solutions for accelerating sustainable energy for all in LLDCs. As Chair of the Landlocked Developing Countries, Zambia remains committed to contribute to finding solutions to the challenges faced by our group of countries, including in the energy sector.

I thank you.