Speech by Zambia at the High-level Meeting on Sustainable Transport of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), Santa Cruz, Bolivia, 13 October, 2016

His Excellency, Mr. Milton Claros Hinojosa, Minister of Public Works and Housing Services of Bolivia

Honourable Ministers Present

His Excellency, Mr. Gyan Chandra Acharya, Under Secretary General and High Representative, UN – OHRLLS

Mr. Wu Hongbo, Under Secretary General, DESA

Your Excellencies Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives to the United Nations

Invited Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

I wish to reiterate my delegation’s gratitude to the Government and people of the Plurinational State of Bolivia for the wonderful hospitality. We particularly love the flag carrier boats that are in our landlocked countries, ready to go and navigate the seas as expositioned by the scenario in the centre of this room.

Zambia’s geographical location makes it a natural transport hub and transit point within our sub-region and beyond. Therefore, our aim is to transform and position Zambia as the preferred transit point in the
region. To this end, we are prioritising investment towards improving road, rail, air and water transportation.

In the road sector, with the goal to landlink the entire Zambia, we have continued to implement the Link Zambia 8000 project which has so far covered 3,700 km. This project is slowly but surely transforming the country into a landlinked country with a good road network to all our eight neighbouring countries since some of the roads within the Link Zambia 8000 are important elements in regional transport corridors as well.

Further, Zambia has in collaboration with Transit Countries and other development entities partnered to develop transport corridors such as the Nacala Road Corridor linking Zambia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique to the Indian Ocean; the Lobito Corridor linking Zambia to the Atlantic Ocean through the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Angola; the Walvis Bay Corridor linking Zambia and DRC to the Atlantic Ocean through Namibia; the Dar-es-salaam Road Corridor and the TAZARA Railway Corridor linking Zambia to the Indian Ocean through Tanzania.

We remain committed to the ideals of regional integration and we have engaged and continue engaging our neighbouring countries and we have
also signed bilateral transport agreements in order to realise the desired benefits of linking our countries.

We are implementing the Lusaka 400 and Copperbelt 400 road projects that will result in the decongestion of traffic and lead to the efficient transportation of goods and services.

In addition, a Road Maintenance Strategy for the period 2015 to 2024 has been adopted to ensure sustainability of the transport infrastructure. Further, to ensure financing for road maintenance and rehabilitation, Government commenced tolling in 2013 and has raised significant amounts of revenue from this initiative since its inception. So far, two tolling points are in place and a further four are envisaged before the end of the year.

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

Good road infrastructure has come with its own challenges such as high road accidents, mostly attributed to excessive speeds by drivers. In an effort to curb the ever increasing traffic accidents on our roads, Government, through the Road Transport and Safety Agency, is trying to change driver behaviour through enhanced driver education, some
engineering and will install technological devices to help control overspeeding on the roads.

With regard to other modes of transport, Zambia is revamping the railways to preserve road infrastructure and ensure that bulky heavy goods are transported on this mode. In addition, greenfield railway spurs have been planned for and are at different project stages to further link Zambia to the Eastern and Western sea Ports of Africa.

In aviation, Zambia has commenced the modernisation and upgrading of airport infrastructure for international airports, provincial and selected district aerodromes. Modern radar systems have also been installed at two major international airports and this has significantly improved safety, security and enhanced revenue collection.

Government also remains committed to the development of inland waterways, and though this mode of transport is the least funded, there has been an improvement in budgetary allocations to this mode in the recent past.

Ladies and Gentlemen
We are aware of the challenges posed by transport as it accounts for about 60% of global oil consumption, 27% of all energy use and 23% of world carbon emissions. Rapid urbanisation and motorisation also pose a high risk to the environment as accessibility and affordability further exacerbate the situation.

Therefore, development of alternative energy sources, especially the clean and renewable energy is of profound importance. The meeting organised by the Co-Chair of friends of LLDCs, the Government of Austria, on renewable energy for LLDCs was indeed timely. As Zambia, we look forward to building modern, safer, cleaner, more efficient and accessible transport systems that will reduce congestion and pollution, and lower transport energy consumption.

In line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the VPoA, we promised to build resilient and modern infrastructure to ensure among others, the provision of sustainable transport systems for all with improved road safety. Therefore, we have to deliver on this.

Together, we should endeavor to achieve the goals and targets we have set for ourselves. To our partners and relevant stakeholders, we are all in this together – we count on your continued support for us to improve and modernise our transportation networks.
I thank you.