



HH Presidential Archive

HAKAINDE HICHILEMA — 7TH PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

Speech During the Official Opening of the Fifth Session of the Thirteenth National Assembly

Date: 12 September 2025

Location: National Assembly, Lusaka, Zambia

Occasion: Opening of the 5th Session of the 13th National Assembly

Madam Speaker,

Introduction

1. We are honoured to join you today to address the house on this auspicious occasion marking the commencement of the Fifth Session of the Thirteenth National Assembly.
2. Before we commence, we would like to honour our late Sixth President, His Excellency Dr. Edgar Chagwa Lungu, who died in Pretoria, South Africa on 5th June, 2025. In this moment of mourning, we stand in solidarity with his family, and the country, offering them our deepest prayers and heartfelt condolences.
3. His service to our country will forever remain a part of Zambia's history. May his memory inspire us to uphold the unity and dignity of our great nation.
4. May we be upstanding for a moment of silence.
5. May his soul rest in eternal peace.

Madam Speaker,

6. Today, we reflect on the progress we have made, the challenges that remain, and our shared national future. We thank the people of Zambia for supporting the UPND new dawn administration during this journey of economic and social transformation of our country. We are moving forward together.

Theme of the Address

14. The theme for this year's address is, therefore, "*consolidating economic and social gains towards a prosperous, resilient and equitable Zambia*".
15. We remain firmly committed to our national mission of building a prosperous Zambia. A Zambia where business and job opportunities are available for all. A Zambia where quality education and accessible healthcare are assured for all. Indeed, a Zambia where every citizen lives a dignified life and can achieve their full potential.

Macroeconomic Developments

17. Economic growth has averaged 5.2 percent between 2021 and 2024. This is more than three times higher than the average growth rate of 1.5 percent recorded during the period 2017 to 2020.

19. Over 92 percent of our external debt has been successfully restructured.

20. Inflation has been on a downward trajectory, from an average of 23.1 percent between January to July, 2021 to an average of 15.5 percent over the same period in 2025.

Agriculture

24. Maize production increased to a historical 3.7 million metric tonnes in the 2024/2025 farming season, compared to 1.5 million in the 2023/2024 season.

27. With the completion of the Bayer Itaba seed production facility in Kabwe, Zambia is now the largest maize seed producer in sub-Saharan Africa.

Mining

57. Annual copper production increased from a low of 733 thousand metric tonnes in 2021, to 821 thousand metric tonnes in 2024.

58. We are aggressively moving towards our target of a record breaking 1 million metric tonnes of copper production by the end of 2025.

Tourism

80. Tourist arrivals increased from 554 thousand in 2021, to a record 2.2 million in 2024, the largest in Zambia's history.

Education

159. The free education policy introduced in 2022 has given an opportunity to all children, regardless of their socio-economic status. Over 2.3 million learners have since returned to school.

167. Since 2022, we have recruited 42 thousand teachers. This year, we are recruiting 2,000 more teachers.

Health

178. Since 2021, we have constructed 282 new health facilities across the country, including seven level-1 hospitals, 111 mini-hospitals, 33 health centres, and 131 health posts.

Conclusion

247. As the UPND new dawn administration, when we promise, we deliver. When we deliver, we consolidate. When we consolidate, we invigorate. Together, we will overcome the challenges that remain, and together as one Zambia, one nation, this country is moving forward.

253. It is now our honour and privilege to declare the Fifth Session of the Thirteenth National Assembly officially opened.

God bless our efforts. God bless our people. God bless our country, Zambia, Africa, and our collective humanity.

