



SPEECH BY

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**AT THE PRESS BRIEFING AHEAD OF THE TRADE MISSION TO
THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO**

MONDAY, 12TH SEPTEMBER, 2022

**Mr. Jan Koivu - Charges d'Affairs of the Finnish Embassy in
Zambia**

**Mr. Gareth Evans – Team Leader of the Accelerated Growth
for Micro, Small and Medium Sized Enterprises in Zambia
(AGS Programme)**

Mrs. Mizinga Melu - Managing Director of Absa Bank Zambia

Senior Government Officials here present

Representatives of various business houses

The Media

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of the Management of the Zambia Development Agency, and indeed on my own behalf, I am excited to officiate at this press briefing to flag off Zambia's 2022 Trade Mission to the Democratic Republic of Congo which will see Zambia increasingly harness export opportunities and scaling up trade with one of our strategic markets.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

According to the recently launched Eighth National Development Plan, the Government intends to continue the promotion of exports as part of the strategy for long-term economic growth. This strategy will positively impact the country's international competitiveness, support the stability of the exchange rate and ensure current account sustainability. In this regard, focus will be on expanding export earnings from various sectors, especially mining, agriculture, manufacturing and tourism. Further, the Government will continue facilitating and formalising trade with neighbouring countries.

As the main agency of Government with the mandate to promote the development of Non-Traditional Exports, ZDA has a major role to play to ensure the actualization of this goal. In so doing, the Agency aims to scale up targeted market research and trade promotion in strategic markets so as to enhance the market access of Zambian products into these markets. This is in line with the policies of the New Dawn

Government and the pronouncements by the Republican President, Mr. Hakainde Hichilema to focus on regional and continental markets.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

DRC is the largest market for Zambia's NTEs. For example in 2021, exports to the DRC amounted to 1.1 billion US dollars, accounting for 41% of the total value of the NTEs and an increase of 22% compared to 898.8 million US dollars that was recorded in the previous year.

In order to maintain the country's foothold in the DRC market, the Agency conducted market research and followed it up with a trade mission last year. Resulting from that trade mission, the participating companies generated leads worth US\$ 43 million and orders amounting to US\$ 20 million. To date, out of the US\$ 20 million orders generated, more than US\$ 6 million worth of transactions have been actualized through exports to the DRC.

In this regard, the Agency has embarked on building on the gains recorded in 2021 by undertaking another trade mission into Lubumbashi, DRC from 22nd to 24th September, 2022.

Whereas the ultimate goal of this mission is to increase trade flows from Zambia into Congo DR in the long term, the specific objectives of this mission are to:

- i. Introduce more Zambian entrepreneurs to the Congolese business environment.
- ii. Conduct business to business meetings between Zambian and Congolese businesses.
- iii. Promote Zambian products in the Congolese market.
- iv. Generate export deals and create market linkages.
- v. Generate export transactions.

During this mission the 50 Zambian companies from various sectors including agriculture, agro-processing, mining, engineering and chemicals and pharmaceuticals among others, will participate in Business-to-Business Meetings with buyers from DRC through a well-coordinated

match making process based on the profiles of the companies.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

This Trade Mission would not have been possible without the financial support from our partners, who have again this year come on board to support us. Allow me therefore, to take this opportunity to thank the following:

- the Embassy of Finland;
- the Finnish government funded Accelerated Growth for Micro, Small and Medium Sized Enterprises in Zambia (AGS Programme); and
- ABSA Bank Zambia PLC

It is through your support that has made it possible to take the 50 export ready Zambian businesses and exporters on this Trade Mission to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo), to help secure market access for their products.

Allow me to also thank the Federation des Entreprises du Congo (FEC) and the Zambian Consulate in Lubumbashi for their roles in the preparations for this upcoming Trade mission.

It will be amiss of me not urge all the businesses which will be part of this year's delegation to take advantage of this opportunity to showcase Zambia's prospects and scale up their businesses.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In concluding, allow me to encourage the organizing team comprising ZDA and its cooperating partners to continue providing such platforms that seek to promote trade and international and regional competitiveness for Zambian products. I am positive that this event will be a success. I therefore declare that the 2022 Trade Mission to the Democratic Republic of Congo officially launched.

I thank you