

SPEECH BY HIS EXCELENCY, BENSON K. CHALI, HIGH COMMISSIONER TO THE UNITED REPUBLIC TANZANIA, FROM THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA, REPRESENTING THE HONOURABLE MINISTER MUTOTWE KAFWAYA , MP, DURING THE 6TH ISCOS ASSEMBLY OF MINISTERS HELD AT MALAIKA BEACH RESORT, MWANZA, TANZANIA ON THE 19TH NOVEMBER, 2019.

PROTOCOLS

THE CHAIR OF THE ISCOS ASSEMBLY – ENG. ISACK KAMWELWE, MP, MINISTER OF WORKS, TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION, UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA,

YOUR EXCELLENCY, AMBASSADOR DAN KAZUNGU, REPRESENTING DR. JAMES MACHARIA,EGH, CABINET SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, INFRASTRUCTURE, HOUSING, URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS, REPUBLIC OF KENYA,

HON. BAGIIRE AGGREY HENRY, MP, MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT, REPUBLIC OF UGANDA,

MR. KASSIM MPAATA, SECRETARY GENERAL AND ALL STAFF OF ISCOS SECRETARIAT,

HONOURABLE INVITED GUESTS,

MEMBERS OF THE PRESS,

ALL PROTOCOLS OBSERVED.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

I BRING FRATERNAL AND WARM GREETINGS FROM THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA.

ALLOW ME TO EXPRESS MY GRATITUDE IN JOINING YOU AT THIS 6TH MEETING OF THE ISCOS ASSEMBLY OF MINISTERS THIS MORNING.

LET ME ALSO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO CONVEY APPOLOGIES FROM THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS, HON. MUTOTWE L. KAFWAYA, MP, REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA, WHO COULD NOT MAKE IT FOR THIS MEETING AS HE HAD AN EARLIER PLANNED ENGANGEMENT. OTHERWISE, HE WAS EARGER AND READY TO BE PART OF THIS IMPORTANT MEETING.

IN THIS REGARD, HE HUMBLY ASKED ME TO REPRESENT HIM AND I AM PRIVILEGED TO BE HERE WITH YOU.

AT THIS JUNCTURE, ALLOW ME TO THANK THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA (URT) FOR HOSTING THIS IMPORTANT MEETING AND THE HOSPITALITY GIVEN TO US SINCE WE ARRIVED IN THIS WONDERFUL CITY OF MWANZA. FURTHER, I WANT TO EXTEND MY GRATITUDE TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF ISCOS AND HIS STAFF FOR THE EXCELLENT PREPARATIONS MADE FOR THIS MEETING.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

I MUST REITERATE THE IMPORTANCE OF ISCOS TO ZAMBIA, TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION THE GEOGRAPHICAL POSITION AS A LAND-LINKED DEVELOPING COUNTRY. THE COUNTRY ASPIRES FOR AN EFFICIENT AND RELIABLE INTRA-REGIONAL AND GLOBAL TRADE ENVIRONMENT. THROUGH ISCOS, WE MAINTAIN OUR PRESENCE AT COASTAL AREAS AND THIS IS OUR MEANS OF RETRACING THE OLD TRADE FOOTPRINTS.

IT IS IMPERATIVE THEREFORE THAT, THERE IS BACK TO BACK FLUIDITY IN THE MOVEMENT OF IMPORTS, EXPORTS AND SERVICES FROM OVERSEAS TRADE THROUGH REGIONAL PORTS TO THE HINTERLAND AND VICE-VERSA, AND TO GUARANTEE THAT INLAND WATERWAYS ARE A CATALYST TO THE GROWTH OF INTRA-AFRICA BUSINESS ESPECIALLY WITH THE ADVENT OF THE AFRICA CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA (AfCFTA).

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC ZAMBIA IS IN THE PROCESS OF MODERNISING ITS FACILITIES AT MPULUNGU PORT ON LAKE TANGANYIKA TO ENSURE SUSTAINABLE LAKE TRANSPORTATION AND OPENING UP OF BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRADERS AND MANUFACTURERS IN THE GREAT LAKES REGION. ISCOS HAS A VITAL ROLE TO PLAY BY OFFERING WELL RESEARCHED EXPERT ADVICE TO HELP GOVERNMENTS ACHIEVE THE INTENDED OBJECTIVES IN COASTAL PORTS AND INLAND WATERWAYS AS WELL AS TRANSIT ROUTES.

IN THIS REGARD, CONCERTED EFFORTS SHOULD GO TOWARDS REDUCING THE HIGH COST OF DOING BUSINESS AND MAKING THE REGION MORE COMPETITIVE IN THIS GLOBALISED WORLD. ISCOS REMAINS A VEHICLE TO ASSIST GOVERNMENTS ACHIEVE THESE IDEALS AND ASPIRATIONS MOOTED BY OUR FOREFATHERS WHO ORIGINATED THE IDEA OF CREATING THE INSTITUTION. THEIR WISDOM AND FORESIGHT SHOULD BE EMULATED AND CHERISHED BY ALL OF US AND GENERATIONS TO COME. THE EXISTENCE OF ISCOS IS EVEN MORE VALID IN THIS 21ST CENTURY.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

THE GOVERNMENT IS ENHANCING EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE LOGISTICS SECTOR BY INVESTING IN HARD AND SOFT INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE BENEFIT OF PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTOR BUSINESS INVESTMENTS. WE ARE AWARE OF EXISTING CONSTRAINTS THAT HINDER THE MOVEMENT OF GOODS AND SERVICES THAT CULMINATE INTO NON-TARIFF BARRIERS (NTBS) AND EVENTUALLY MAKE PRICES OF PRODUCTS IN-STORE SHELVES EXPENSIVE FOR OUR CONSUMERS. THEREFORE, THERE IS NEED FOR ISCOS TO CONTINUE WORKING WITH GOVERNMENTS IN COMING UP WITH APPROPRIATE POLICIES THAT ARE PRO-BUSINESS AND WILL HELP ELIMINATE VICES LIKE CORRUPTION, DELAYS AT PORTS, TRANSIT ROUTES AND BORDER AREAS, IN OUR QUEST TO MAKE OUR REGION MORE COMPETITIVE.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

LET ME COMMEND ISCOS FOR THE VARIOUS PROGRAMS THAT ARE BEING UNDERTAKEN INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO THE DOMESTICATION OF MARINE CARGO INSURANCE (MCI), THE FORMATION AND STRENGTHENING OF SHIPPERS' COUNCILS IN THE REGION, TRAINING OF IMPORTERS AND EXPORTERS (SHIPPERS), THE FIGHT AGAINST MARITIME PIRACY, PARTICIPATION IN THE FORUM FOR MARITIME ADMINISTRATIONS, PARTICIPATION IN PROGRAMS AIMED AT REDUCTION IN THE POLLUTION OF THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT, ENGAGING SHIPPING LINES ON MATTERS AFFECTING MOVEMENT OF CARGO, BLUE

ECONOMY INITIATIVES, VARIOUS RESEARCH ON PORTS AND OTHER TRADE FACILITATION INITIATIVES.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

THESE ACTIVITIES BEING UNDERTAKEN BY ISCOS GO A LONG WAY IN MITIGATING THE COST OF DOING BUSINESS AND MUST BE ENCOURAGED. FOR EXAMPLE ZAMBIA IS LOSING ABOUT USD 230 MILLION ANNUALLY TO FOREIGN INSURANCE COMPANIES AND THUS DENYING THE ECONOMY THE MUCH NEEDED FOREIGN EXCHANGE. OUR IMPORTERS AND EXPORTERS NEED THEREFORE, TO CHANGE THE WAY OF DOING BUSINESS BY IMPORTING ON COST AND FREIGHT BASIS INSTEAD OF THE TRADITIONAL COST INSURANCE AND FREIGHT (CIF).

PIRACY AND OTHER MARITIME CRIMES DO NOT ONLY AFFECT COASTAL COUNTRIES BUT LAND-LINKED COUNTRIES AS WELL. THEREFORE, THE NEED TO HEED OUR CALL FOR CONCERTED EFFORTS BY MEMBER COUNTRIES AND COOPERATING PARTNERS TO DEAL WITH THE VICE.

MR. CHAIRMAN, THERE IS CONCERN ON THE ISSUE OF SAFETY AND SECURITY ON OUR INLAND WATERWAYS WHICH HAS LED TO THE LOSS OF MANY LIVES AND PROPERTY THROUGH THE NEGLIGENCE OF OUR OPERATORS AND THE INADEQUACY IN THE ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS AND REGULATIONS BY THE RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITIES. THIS IS A SERIOUS MATTER WHICH SHOULD BE LOOKED INTO AS A REGION TO AVOID ACCIDENTS RECURRING. I URGE ISCOS TO CONTINUE PROVIDING FORUMS FOR THE SHARING OF INFORMATION ON SAFETY OF OUR WATERWAYS AND IDENTIFYING COMMON DENOMINATORS IN MARINE ACCIDENTS.

IN CONCLUSION

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

WE WISH TO RECOMMEND THAT ISCOS STRIVES TO ENHANCE ITS POSITION AS A CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE IN MARITIME AND SHIPPING. ISCOS SHOULD BE A REPOSITORY FOR VALUE ADDING INFORMATION THAT SHOULD HELP REGIONAL

ECONOMIES BECOME MORE COMPETITIVE AND HELP REDUCE THE COST OF DOING BUSINESS FOR OUR PEOPLE.

LET ME TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO REAFFIRM THE COMMITMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA TO ISCOS AND TO THE IDEALS AND ASPIRATIONS OF ISCOS AS LAID BY OUR FOUNDING FATHERS AND WISH TO INFORM THE MEETING THAT ZAMBIA IS WORKING TIRELESSLY TO ENSURE THAT THE LONG OVERDUE OBLIGATIONS TO THE ORGANISATION ARE SETTLED. AS A YOUNG MARITIME NATION ZAMBIA CAN ONLY BE EAGER TO CONTINUE ASSOCIATING HERSELF WITH THE BIGGEST MARITIME BLOCK OF NATIONS IN THIS PART OF AFRICA AS IT WAS ALLUDED TO IN MY SPEECH ON THE BENEFITS FROM THE ORGANIZATION TO ZAMBIA, I WISH TO PAY GLOWING TRIBUTE AND EXPRESS OUR GRATITUDE TO THE MEMBER STATES FOR THEIR PATIENCE, ENDURANCE AND FOR STANDING WITH ZAMBIA IN ITS LOWEST EBB. THIS SHALL HOWEVER NOT BE A PERMANENT SITUATION. LIKE OUR SYMBOL OF THE NOBLE EAGLE ON OUR FLAG, WE SHALL SOON OVERCOME THESE TEMPORALY SETBACKS.

WITH THESE REMARKS, I THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR ATTENTION AND WISH THIS GATHERING SUCCESS IN TODAY'S DELIBERATIONS.

MAY GOD BLESS YOU ALL