STATEMENT

BY

AMBASSADOR H.E. DR. MWABA P. KASESE-BOTA
CHAIR OF THE GLOBAL BUREAU OF LAND LOCKED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES GROUP

ON THE OCCASION OF

THE ADOPTION OF THE VIENNA PROGRAMME OF ACTION
FOR THE DECADE 2014 – 2024 AND THE POLITICAL DECLARATION
AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY PLENARY

2TH DECEMBER, 2014
NEW YORK
Mr. President,

On behalf of the 32 Landlocked developing countries, I would like to express gratitude to the President of the General Assembly for this occasion of the consideration of the resolution to endorse the Vienna Programme of Action (VPoA) adopted by our Heads of State and Government and their representatives at the 2nd United Nations Conference for Landlocked Developing Countries in Vienna, Austria from 3rd to 5th November, 2014.

I wish to thank the Government and the People of Austria for their generosity and hospitality and further congratulate them for successfully hosting the important conference.

I thank all the delegations that sat and worked with us for their commitment and dedication in negotiations and for their magnanimity and flexibility which resulted in successful adoption of the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDCs for the 2014-2024 Decade, and its related Political Declaration.

Mr. President,

The newly adopted Vienna Programme of Action for LLDCs demonstrates a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by LLDCs and draws upon lessons learned, gaps and experiences from the Almaty Programme of Action, including the context of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).
This document seeks to promote economic and trade competitiveness for a sustained and inclusive growth. The ambitious programme, further contains specific, realistic yet time-bound objectives and targets aimed at addressing the special development needs and challenges that arise from landlockedness, remoteness and geographical constraints which face LLDCs, in a more coherent comprehensive and integrated manner.

The VPoA premised on the fact that LLDCs continue to face unacceptably high transit costs with delayed transit times as compared to their maritime neighbours. The VPoA gives cognizance to new and emerging challenges such as climate change, external shocks, and increasing economic structural constraints such as low productivity and lack of competitiveness.

The VPoA incorporates concrete actions for the next decade that have been premised on 6 key priority areas and on genuine partnerships involving LLDCs, transit developing countries and their development partners, including multilateral institutions.

These are:
1) fundamental transit policy issues,
2) infrastructure development and maintenance,
3) international trade and trade facilitation,
4) regional integration and cooperation,
5) structural economic transformation and 
6) means of implementation, which forms a good basis for commitment and action and are critical to addressing the challenges of LLDCs in this era.

Mr. President,

We are aware that the LLDC Agenda is taking place at a time when the global community is engaged in other parallel but complementary processes. We are expectant and confident that the concerns of our countries would be meaningfully reflected in the Post-2015 development
agenda, as well as in the Financing for Development discussions. It is worth underscoring that the Vienna Programme of Action is only complementary to these important global dialogues, and as such, it is our desire that all these interrelated processes be integrated to harness synergy, and to deliver as one.

Mr. President,

May I take this opportunity to stress that in following up to the 2nd United Nation Conference on LLDCs, there is also need to further elaborate on concrete measures and a roadmap for the implementation of the VPoA in order to guide the LLDCs, transit developing countries and their development partners as well as other stakeholders on a path of a coordinated and effective implementation of the conference outcome. In this regard, the Government of The Republic of Zambia in the capacity as Chair of the LLDCs group announced the follow-up high level meeting to the conference, to be held in Livingstone Zambia next year in June, 2015. I wish to appeal to the collective support of member states to participate in this meeting.

The successful implementation of this new Programme of Action is dependent on the depth and reach of the many important partnerships that we have and continue to forge. I would like to thank our partners for their willingness to lend their support in addressing challenges related to land-lockedness. I would like to thank our transit neighbours who make it possible for our countries to have a deeper and meaningful engagement in international trade. We are grateful for the financial and technical support extended to us by our development partners in the context of North-South, and South-South and triangular cooperation. We also count on the continued support of the private sector players as well as multilateral institutions in the development of our productive capacities and transport infrastructure, among others.

I also wish to emphasise the critical role that United Nations systems particularly the specialized agencies, and Regional Economic Commissions will have to play. In this context, please allow me to draw your attention to the great need of a new and expanded mandate as well as capacity of the Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked
Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS) in order to ably support the full and successful implementation of the VPoA. It is our expectation that adequate resources would be given and allocated to that office to enable it undertake the effective support of the Vienna Programme Action, as well as in implementation, monitoring, review and reporting the activities as called for in the new mandate.

I look forward to the continued support of all member states and to the full and successful implementation of the VPoA.

I thank you.