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STATEMENT

BY

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AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

ON

AGENDA ITEM 65:
PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

AT THE

THIRD COMMITTEE
OF THE
68TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

NEW YORK
17th October, 2013
Mr. Chairman,

My delegation wishes to thank you and the other members of the bureau for your dedication in leading the deliberations of this committee. My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by Malawi on behalf of SADC.

My delegation welcomes the comprehensive report of the Secretary General on the status of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and on the implementation of the priority themes of the resolution entitled "Rights of the Child" from its Sixty-First to Sixty-Fifth sessions.

Zambia is cognizant of the special protection required with respect to children's rights, and of its obligation, as a sovereign state, and in partnership with other stakeholders, to ensure that all children enjoy their civil, political, social, cultural, and economic rights without discrimination of any manner.

The Secretary General’s report has highlighted a number of situations and factors that prevent the full realization of Children’s rights. These factors include; poverty, abuse, trafficking in children and their organs, the exploitation of children, whatever its form, child prostitution, child pornography, neglect, illiteracy, gender inequality, disability, social inequality and poor legal protection. Faced with this reality it is therefore imperative for member states, individually and collectively, to continue to engage in concerted efficacious efforts to improve the situation of children and their welfare.

Mr. Chairman,

In an effort to fulfill its obligation to create an environment in which the well-being of the child is protected, the Government of Zambia continues to provide and to ensure universal access to education by all children. Zambia is proud to have worked tirelessly with its cooperating partners in ensuring increased school enrolments as well as attaining gender parity in schools, in order to meet the benchmark for MDG 2. Zambia however implores the international community to build on the gains of the MDG for the post 2015 development agenda, with embodiment of qualitative standards in the education sector which levels the education field and further bridges the gap of access to quality education, and inspires all children to attain their full potential and competitiveness.
Mr. Chairman, mainstreaming disability in policy and programmes as integral to Children’s rights is cardinal. My government therefore welcomes the outcome document of the High level meeting on MDGS and other internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities. The Government of Zambia has enacted legislation to ensure that all children with disabilities enjoy their human rights and other fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with other children.

Mr. Chairman,

Every so often, the very society that is meant to protect and assure the safety of children has been hostile and dangerous for the very children it is supposed to protect, especially the girl child. A number of harmful and traditional cultural practices continue to endanger the life of a child. Among these practices are, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and child labour. As a consequence these practices lead to chronic poverty and slow down the progress in the attainment of the MDGs, a point which has been acknowledged in the Secretary General’s report.

Zambia like many other countries has high prevalence of Early and child marriages. The Government of Zambia recognizes child and early marriages as an obstacle for children and young women to obtain full productivity as adults, impacts negatively on their social and economic status and perpetuates girls vulnerability and gender inequalities. In addition Child and Early marriages have health consequences and contribute significantly to increased maternal mortality. As the government of Zambia promotes rights of children, including advancing the well being of girl child, It has vowed to stem out the scourge of child and early marriages and has mounted a robust campaign, which utilizes all key stakeholders including traditional leadership as champions to end early and child marriages. Zambia looks forward to having the component of children’s rights in all spheres of sustainable development with a strengthened position within the post 2015 development agenda.

Mr. Chairman

My delegation believes that all forms of violence against children in any given setting should be eliminated. We are committed to ensuring that children are in a safe and free environment. We therefore welcome the annual report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children.
Finally Mr. Chairman,

I wish to call for greater international co-operation and partnerships for the promotion and protection of the rights of children. Let us remain resolute in our individual and collective efforts to create a world fit for children.

I thank you!