



SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY DR. KENNETH D. KAUNDA, FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA ON THE OCCASION OF THE OPENING OF THE SECOND LUBUTO LIBRARY.

VENUE: NGWERERE BASIC SCHOOL, GARDEN TOWNSHIP, LUSAKA

DATE: 10 NOVEMBER, 2010

Madam President;

Hon. Crispin Musosha, Deputy Minister of Education;

His Excellency Ambassador Mark C. Storella, the U.S. Ambassador to Zambia;

Our children here present;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

I am delighted to be here today and to share with you and especially with the Lubuto activities, the joy of opening the second of these wonderful Lubuto Libraries, this time hosted by the Ngwerere Basic School in Lusaka. I have noted with a deep sense of appreciation that this location for this library is strategic in many ways, for this is one of the areas in Lusaka with a large population where such facilities do not exist. It will be of great benefit to this community and beyond for educational purposes as well as enlightenment.

I have also noted with appreciation that this is the first library the Lubuto project has built in partnership with the Ministry of Education, pursuant to a request by that Ministry for Lubuto Libraries to spread throughout the country.

Director of ceremonies, ladies and gentlemen, there are many reasons why I am delighted to be here with you. First, as a teacher, it is clear to me that these libraries with their excellent programs will strengthen the efforts of the government in providing equitable access to education, raising literacy levels in the country, and developing the talents of the next generation of Zambians. Second, as a leader, I am excited by the prospects they offer to the millions of Zambians who will have access to the services Lubuto Libraries offer. The project has also potential to meet the needs of the young and the old yearning for light, for knowledge to access to the best that Zambia and the world offer in the 21st Century.

As a grandparent, I rejoice to be with you our wonderful children. Indeed, I rejoice to be associated with an initiative that has the potential to change lives of hundreds of thousands of children, who due to lack of education and skills still walk in darkness of ignorance and wallow in poverty without hope. So I wholeheartedly congratulate you, Madam President, for conceiving such a noble and brilliant idea. To your entire

team both here and in the United States which has worked hard to bring the project to fruition and made the opening of this second Lubuto Library possible. I wish to say congratulations.

Ladies and gentlemen, I take the liberty on behalf of all Zambians to thank the international business communications corporation, Dow Jones and Company, whose financial support has made this second library possible. I hope this will encourage international and local business as well as bilateral partners in Zambia to invest in scaling up the Lubuto model. For I am convinced that the Lubuto Libraries are a one-time investment whose returns will multiply over generations.

Zambia has tremendous challenges in meeting the Millennium Development Goals to which the Government has committed itself. Perhaps the greatest challenge is the enormous growth in the population of young people in our country. The population between 0 and 20 must surely scare both parents and educationalist in the country with a rapidly rising growth rate. School places are inadequate and traditional approaches just cannot cope with this challenge. The result is that hundreds of thousands of children are squeezed out of the school system at a tender age. They are thrown into the cold and cruel world without hope in their future. Worse still, many young girls fall prey to idleness and become victims of early pregnancies and early marriages. Even some in school fallout and join the victims of fate. Their future is destroyed. In a crime-ridden world which offers them no hope, many young children also fall prey to antisocial behaviour such as alcohol and drug abuse and even stealing. Yet many of these kids are brilliant with qualities to excel in their performance in and outside class, and have the potential to make tremendous contribution to the development of their communities and the country. Instead of advancing their leadership potential, enhancing and utilizing their inherent skills to exploit the vast rich natural resources in their communities and nation, they wallow in vice-gripping poverty and degradation.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am fully convinced that high quality libraries can reach out to these youth to pull them from this fate. There can be no doubt therefore that the one door open to those to whom every other door of opportunity is closed, is the

Lubuto Libraries. What the Lubuto Library Project is showing us is that such facilities are not just places with books, but do contain a minimum complete, balanced and targeted book collections. Connecting the past, present and future in their activities, librarians preserve our culture and identity for our children, and the Lubuto activists are no exceptions. Real libraries start with a genuine understanding of the needs of the people they serve and do everything within their power to meet those needs, and Lubuto's highly professional librarians know the particular needs of Zambia and its children, particularly those of our most vulnerable children and youth.

We see today that Lubuto activities go far beyond its libraries' walls in ways that will greatly benefit our whole society. Engaging our teachers and some of the libraries' brilliant youth in creating computer programs to teach reading in Zambian languages is just one of the contributions.

Focusing attention on the needs of our writers, illustrators and publishers to inspire the next generation, and preserving and making available again the old literature that used to do that, is a gift that these librarians are working hard to bring to us. And directly changing the lives of thousands of children and youth through impactful programs such as Motivational Mentoring, Visual Arts and Performing Arts, as well as reading and learning in ways that open the world to them, is a miracle that happens daily in these beautiful and welcoming libraries.

Ladies and gentlemen, Lubuto was born in Zambia, born of a genuine care and involvement with street children and youth in Lusaka over a decade ago. Today we celebrate the dedication and commitment of scores of Lubuto professionals who, during that decade guided by knowledgeable Zambians and in partnership with Government, have not only built two of these great libraries but have developed a plan to transform the educational landscape of the country. I am especially happy that our landscape will be repopulated with these buildings and reflect our architectural traditions, our culture.

I am delighted that your plans include rural areas beginning with Nabukuyu East of Monze. As we are all aware, rural areas face an educational crisis of major

proportions which needs to be resolutely addressed, but this should be not be left to Government alone to tackle. As responsible citizens, we must all play our part. And our partners can have a profound impact on rural education and enlightening future generations by helping us build more and more Lubuto Libraries. We all need to join in and share in the joy of bringing light to the youth, this transformative force whom possessing inherent power to change Zambia – this our “One land and One Nation” strong and free.

When I toured the first Lubuto Library over two years ago, and learned of the vast scope of its book collection and programs, I noted that the Lubuto Library Project was “still holding on to humanity”. This work helps form the basis of a stable and *humane* society. To the millions of children and youth in Zambia I say: “The future belongs to those who prepare for it”. The answer lies in your education and skills training combined with hard work. If you do not prepare, you will lose your freedom and become victims of exploiters and corrupt leaders.

Again I commend Lubuto for this achievement which is most welcome. Let us all join with these libraries and grow in knowledge and power for the good of our country and the human race.

I thank you for your attention

May the Good Lord God Almighty continue to Bless and Guide you.

God Bless our Nation!