



**REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA**

**THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA  
MR. HAKAINDE HICHILEMA**

**INTERVIEW WITH HOT FM**

**STATEHOUSE**

**ON FRIDAY, 19TH AUGUST, 2022**

**PRESS HIGHLIGHTS**



# PRESS HIGHLIGHTS

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## On family, business, and public office

- We remain an ordinary family. Despite the fact that we work here at this state house, the peoples state house, and serve the people of Zambia, we still remain an ordinary family and Mutinta still prepares meals for us.
- When we were in the opposition, our message to our children was to stay in school. Now they have finished school and we are encouraging them to work for themselves. My children won't be given Government jobs.
- Our search for public office was never for glamour, it was to serve the people of Zambia. That position has not changed. Nkwazi house needs a lot of work and right now, and it is a historic state asset but our priority right now is restoring the economy for the people of Zambia.
- We want to encourage those seeking public office to work for themselves first and create value, so they are not eyeing nice things when they seek for public office. We have to create a separation, the assets in the public service belong to the public and private assets must remain private.



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- The businesses we grew in our life before politics, we hope to hand over to our children one day but we encourage our children to work for themselves just as we worked for ourselves.
- We are focused on transparency. If you manage your assets well, especially now that our economy is improving, assets grow and figures will change.
- We come with clean hands and we always conducted our business with clean hands. We encourage you to enquire, all our assets have been declared and are on public record.

### **On sustainable economic development**

- Money should be made available. That's true, we agree and we are working on that. The first thing we need to do is to restructure our debt and put the extra money where it's needed. Once this is done, money will be put back into the economy and people will start seeing it.
- In this period we have been in office we have been able to turnaround the economy and we are projected to grow at 3.5% from 0 minus.



- As we were travelling to different countries, we were able to reach agreements to sell to these countries. That's why the currency is doing better, we are exporting more and getting more income.
- Our performance cannot be rated by ourselves, the people must rate us. They put us in office and we work for them, so it is dependent on how the people feel we have done.
- When we came in, we said we will control kongole. Are we doing this? Yes. We have not defaulted on any debt, we have managed to get the official creditors committee on board with the common framework for our debt restructuring. Is that a success? Yes!

### **On public appreciation**

- There's no need to thank me. When I send my children to school, they shouldn't thank me. Maybe they will, but you know my response "It is my duty". HH's duty is to make the lives of the people of Zambia better, so is the cabinet, so are the members of parliament and so is anyone in public office.
- Zambians don't have to thank me for the job I'm doing. It is what they voted for me to do. They must not praise me if I do wrong things either.



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## **On fixing a broken system**

- Government is a living thing. I am a servant of the people and I will continue where others left off. Where they did good, we will continue that good. Where they did wrong, we will find an answer.
- We need to get rid of the notion that a project is owned by PF UPND or MMD. The projects are owned by the people of Zambia.
- The perception that public money belongs to a political Party, that's where we get it wrong! When they borrow money, who suffers? It's you the Zambian people! That's why we must conduct ourselves well when we are in office. So that we don't bring pain but pleasure to citizens.
- The kwacha was reaching K24 against US\$1. We've brought it down and stabilized things. Inflation was 24.5%. Where is it now? Single-digit. Is that a success or not?
- Interest rates were too high. We've brought them down and they are still coming down. I'm sure you are aware some banks have brought down the mortgage rates to allow you to build or buy a house from 24% to 16%.



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## **On keeping load-shedding promises**

- When we came in, there was load shedding. We promised the people of Zambia that within a year in office there will be no load-shedding. Is there load shedding now? No.
- How did we end load shedding? By looking at a few options - one of them being that the Kafue Gorge Lower power station was abandoned in 2019 with only 1/5 generators built. The rest were abandoned. We've raised the money & brought the other generators on board.
- Over and above exporting to South Africa, DRC & Zimbabwe, we want to export even more power to our neighbours.
- The Congo-Zambia interconnection should be brought online so that we can also export to East Africa like we are doing in Southern Africa that's already connected.



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## **On constitutional & legal reform**

- The Constitution is the people's mandate. That's why when a government tries to run a constitution to their own dictates, they don't succeed. It's the people's domain.
- By and large, we know what is wrong with the Constitution. Zambians know, through the various constitution review commissions, the lacunas which were identified. We agree & would like it changed but we can only get it changed if the people - they must agree.
- We are wasting money on by-elections. But the Constitution provides for by-elections. We would like to stop them, and put that money to buy extra school desks, to buy medicines, but we are bound by the law. We promised to deliver the rule of law, and we have delivered that.
- The reason Bill 10 failed was because it was driven by a political party. We want to make sure the constitutional change is driven by the people, with the people, for the people. That's what we are working on.



- The things we are able to change that we promised, we are working on them. For example, the Public Order Act- cabinet has approved the process of amendments and it is now going through consultations. The Public Order Act will be amended.
- Ndewo Muma markets, kulibe. Bantu baziwendela. That was one of our campaign promises, that we will restore law and order and we have fulfilled that. We do things in the right way.
- When in opposition, we promised we'd take the money closer to the local communities. Community Development Fund is one fundamental improvement. From K1.6m to K25.7m per constituency, per year. Substantial.

### **On decentralisation**

- There is a CDF Act that seems to be causing restrictions in the usage of CDF. We're going to amend that to make sure we stay within the law.
- We want the community leaders involved in CDF decisions and not only Councillors and MPs. Communities must decide what development priorities are for them and they must be involved.





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- We've included more things into the CDF; Women's Fund, Youth Fund, Enterprise Fund & Small loans with very low interest rates. This is to allow economy growth at the local level.
- The economy is not Lusaka, Zambia is not Lusaka. Zambia is Lundazi, it is Mwinilunga, it's everywhere. So, we must use the CDF to unlock the opportunities at district level.
- The free education policy did not include the aspect of boarding. We have found an answer to that through CDF. The children who are in a boarding school that was not covered by the free education policy and provision is now taken up by CDF bursaries.
- As we run the economy, create jobs and utilise resources, we must do this in a sustainable manner that does not destroy the environment.
- Ministry of Tourism is one of our centre-stage economic ministries. Tourism is huge business, yet we have not marketed Zambia well in the past. We're now repositioning ourselves to market the special endowments our country has been blessed with.



## **On the rule of law**

- Our message is very clear, before anyone is arrested there should be an investigation. I'm a victim of being arrested without investigation - it wasn't good for me it's not good for anyone else.
- If the crime is bondable, they must get bond. If it's bailable they must get bail and be taken to court within 48hrs. Everyone should be treated equitably before the law. But the law must be followed fairly.
- On the question of Mumbi Phiri not seeing a judge yet, we must work together to unblock the justice delivery system because that isn't correct. Everyone must be treated fairly. The delays are unacceptable & we're committed to reforming the justice system & clearing up the backlog.
- We've set up additional courts like the Economic Crimes Court to help unclog the courts and make sure they function efficiently.
- Some laws that need to be amended are being looked into by the Law Development Commission, among these are the Defamation of the President Law.



## **On jobs**

- We've recruited teachers & healthcare workers and there's more to come. Our intention is not only to create public sector jobs. There are more private sector jobs on the way through investments coming in.
- Yes, we need to make room for young people to enter the job market while, at the same time, looking after those who retire by paying them their benefits.

## **On creating value for the country**

- Let's not listen to noise but to substance. Check what we said we'd do in our manifesto. We promised to reunite this country. Now every province has a cabinet minister. We said we'd end violence & we've done that. We're now getting back to normalcy.
- We promised to stabilize the economy. We have. We have put Zambia back in the Champions League. This is all just the beginning.
- Above all, we want change to be delivered. We are walking the talk. This is your government so, where we go wrong, correct us. Let's work as a team. Division and fights are not helpful. Let's focus on creating value for our country.