

~~ATTENTION - SYLVIA MWEEMBA~~

**SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY, DR.  
KENNETH D. KAUNDA, FIRST PRESIDENT  
OF ZAMBIA, AT THE IPT AFRICAN  
CONFERENCE ON PEACE THROUGH  
TOURISM**

**THEME: A 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY VISION FOR  
AFRICAN TOURISM**

**VENUE: INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL,  
LUSAKA**

**DATE: 7<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2005**

The Chairperson,

Your Excellency, Mr. Levy Patrick Mwanawasa, SC,  
President of the Republic of Zambia,

Your Excellency, Chief Olusegun Obasango,  
President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria And Chairman of the African  
Union (AU),

Honourable Ministers,

Members of Diplomatic Corps,

Distinguished Invited Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am greatly honoured and privileged for this opportunity to address this important Conference. A Conference on Peace through Tourism. I am in this regard, grateful to His Excellency, President Levy Mwanawasa, for the gracious invitation he has extended to me in order that I can make a contribution to the deliberations of this meeting. I know that being among so many experts in the field of tourism, I will only be able to make a modest contribution to your work.

Chairperson, distinguished delegates, today marks an important milestone in our collective efforts to enhance the tourism industry in Africa, a sector, to which we have not so far paid the necessary attention yet it has the potential to be a catalyst for the economic revival of many of our Countries in Africa. I am therefore, truly thankful that I am part of this historic meeting.

Let me also take this opportunity to welcome in our midst, a distinguished son of Africa, a Statesman and a devout panafricanist, His Excellency,

Chief Olusegun Obasango, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and current Chairman of the African Union (AU). As Africans, we are truly thankful to you Mr. President for the role you continued to play to bring peace to a number of trouble spots on our beloved continent. In my language we say, “apa epashili pakuleka” – meaning, please continue. We are deeply indebted to you for your tireless efforts in the interest of the attainment of peace for us all. We need peace in order to attain sustainable development. Indeed, there can be no development without peace and no peace without development.

The theme for this Conference, “Tourism: Pathway to a prosperous Africa,” aptly captures the vision of Africa’s founding fathers, who in their wisdom, joined hands to mobilize their people to rise against colonialism and apartheid so that succeeding generations of their respective countries could, in freedom, dignity and harmony build this great continent to prosperity.

As an old freedom fighter, you will excuse when I say that references to Africa’s founding fathers bring back fond memories which I have cherished for a long time. For I knew those patriots who had the courage and determination to wage a relentless struggle for the liberation of Africa from colonial bondage. They represent our struggle as a people against foreign domination. Their mission was to liberate Africa, but ours today is to build on their achievements by realizing the aspirations of our people to attain economic prosperity for our beloved continent.

I can therefore proudly declare that these were noble people who built our continent. Their names are chronicled in the scrap books and history documents of Africa. Indeed courageous people who sacrificed their blood and their lives for our freedom. We can honour them by working together with a common objective to attain social and economic development so that our people may live in a clean environment under conditions of peace and stability.

Chairperson, the topic for my presentation is, “A 21st Century Vision For African Tourism.” In my humble view, our vision for African Tourism should be multifaceted and forming an integral part of our development strategies, policies and programmes. This vision cannot therefore be defined in isolation of our development goals. It should be based on the need to promote international cooperation and understanding among all the people of our one world. Indeed, such a vision should, to all intents and purposes,

In order for our efforts to succeed, there is need for us to develop deliberate policies that promote the tenets of democracy, which include the observance of political, economic and social rights, as well as other liberties which are enshrined in the universal declaration of the human rights of the United Nations to which our countries fully subscribe.

We need therefore to be systematic in the manner we plan our strategies to boost the tourism industry. In my view, it is important that we establish networks through the established structures of our continent, in order to derive maximum benefits from this industry. It is also necessary to form viable partnerships through our sub-regional groups, such as: Southern African Development Community (SADC), Economic Commission For West African States (ECOWAS), Economic Community for East Africa (ECEA), The Common Market For Eastern And Southern Africa (COMESA) and the Magreb Region.

I believe that such a strategy can be an effective tool in facilitating the movement of tourists from one country to another. It would also enable the players in the hospitality industry to network with their counterparts in other countries, thereby making it easy for flow of information to be made available to the clients.

Chairperson, one other area that needs to be looked at is the visa requirements that may be imposed on foreign citizens. As a continent, we may, as a long term goal, look forward to a time when there will be no need for visas for citizens from one African country to another. Indeed, I am aware that we have already committed ourselves to the attainment of free movements of people, goods and services among our countries. This is a lofty goal which we must meet without fail. For it will enhance closer cooperation among our countries and peoples. It will contribute to peace among us by removing any suspicion that may linger on some people's minds. In this way, tourism would be playing an important role in enhancing peace among our people and our countries.

Tourism affects many sectors of development. If it is well managed, it can serve as a hub of development in our countries. Let us remember that tourism and the environment compliment each other. It is therefore important that we take the necessary measures to guard against environmental degradation. We need also to harness our environment prudently to avoid deforestation. I wish further to appeal to our

Governments to enact strict laws for conservation of wild life where such Laws do not exist. Experience teaches us that wild life attracts many tourists to our countries. The environment therefore plays an important part in enhancing the tourism industry.

Chairperson, so many issues are interlinked with the tourism industry. You will recall that the dastardly acts of September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 in New York City and Washington DC served as a wake up call to the world on the sensitivity of the tourism industry. Those acts of terrorism adversely affected the Airline business the world over, as many people were hesitant to fly. As a result, some Airlines became extinct due to the loss of business. The hospitality sector also lost business due to reduced occupancy.

As this conference meets to map out strategies for our vision in this sector, we should bear in mind that tourism is extremely important to Africa's development. Through this sector, we can create many jobs for our People thereby broadening the Tax base for Governments to collect revenue. When you reduce unemployment, you are in actual fact contributing to peace in the Country.

Distinguished delegates, in order to boost our tourism industries, we need to look at the means of transportation of the tourist both in terms of international travelers and the connecting flights within our national boundaries. This requires that we establish national carriers to work with other airlines to ferry passengers from abroad into our respective countries and to have readily available flights within our countries. The establishment of national carriers is not a luxury but a necessary tool to facilitate the smooth movement of tourists from abroad and within our countries. The private sector too has a role to play in ferrying of tourists either by air charters or road transport.

I have already referred to the need for peace in order to foster development. I wish in this regard to submit that peace is not just the absence of war, but it also relates to lack of security due to criminal activities in any given society.

Just imagine a situation where crime is the order of the day. People would be feeling insecure to visit such a country and tourism would in turn take a nose dive. It is therefore necessary that if we are to encourage people to visit our tourist resorts in our respective countries, we need to do everything possible to have peace, tranquility and stability in our nations. Like capital

flight, tourism is a very sensitive industry. It can easily be affected adversely by many factors both local and foreign.

Chairperson, the situation I have just described above requires that, nations join hands to uphold the principles of multilateralism in their international relations. As the charter of the United Nations provides, there is need for the international community to work together to promote world peace and economic cooperation among nations. Through this process, we may be able to minimize hot beds of tension around the world and other conditions which may give rise to instability. As you are no doubt aware, conditions of instability in one country usually have a ripple effect on the entire region concerned. So peace is cardinal if we are to attain sustainable economic progress.

Africa is a continent in transition. As we prepare for the future we should look back in our history in order to learn from the mistakes inherent in our previous policies and practices. We should therefore not shy away from admitting mistakes we may have made in managing not only our tourism industries but the overall economic sectors of our nations. So as you deliberate over the main theme of this conference, I wish to urge you to give a critical review of what has transpired so far and ponder on how we can collectively ensure that we move forward with renewed hope and determination. We should also draw lessons from the work of the previous sessions of this Conference, which in my view, would be of tremendous value to our work at this session.

Let me at this point in time address an important issue which if neglected has the potential to reverse whatever progress we may make, not only as Africans, but as the human race. Africa today faces a serious crisis with frightening implications on the survival of humanity. The HIV/AIDS pandemic has in the past 20 years taken millions of our people; especially the young in the prime of their lives and many more are living with the HIV virus. This pandemic has decimated the work place. There is no sector that has been spared. The civil service, the teaching service, mining industry, agriculture and indeed the tourism industries have all been affected.

We cannot therefore expect to attain economic growth to boost prospects for tourism if we do not address the impact of HIV/AIDS, not only on industry but also on the wellbeing of nations. The AIDS pandemic cannot be

successfully dealt with in isolation. We need to network with other stakeholders both in our nations and at international level in order to share our experiences and to be able to plan together on strategies for reversing the spread of this pandemic.

As leaders, both in government and private sector, we need to take the lead in the public awareness campaign in order to deal with the myths that are associated with HIV/AIDS. We must as a matter of urgency, deal with the question of stigma of the infected and to encourage people to go for testing and counseling so that they can know their status. This is important so that those that are infected are counseled to live positively and those that are HIV negative are similarly counseled and encouraged to remain that way.

Chairperson, I am not telling you to do what I have not done. In 2002, I went for voluntary testing. My results were negative but I made a public statement to the effect that, even if I had been found to be HIV positive, I would have announced that and would have used that status to intensify the struggle against HIV/AIDS. I therefore wish to appeal to our leaders and the general public that it is necessary that we break the wall of silence so that many people can be encouraged to go for counseling and testing.

Chairperson, in view of the devastating impact, HIV/AIDS is having on society, especially in sub-Sahara Africa, we must take measures to intensify the fight against this pandemic at all fronts and by all means at our disposal, including abstinence and the use of condoms. But abstinence is the best form of prevention. As the old saying goes; prevention is better than cure. We must remain relentless and to apply similar zeal and determination as we exhibited against colonialism and apartheid. It is important that we take this matter seriously, if we are to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS and its impact on humanity.

Public awareness campaign is an effective tool in preventing the spread of this disease. My own organization, namely; the Kenneth Kaunda Children of Africa Foundation has joined hands with other stakeholders in the advocacy campaign

As I conclude my remarks, I wish to thank the organizing committee of this Conference under the able Chairmanship of the Minister of Tourism, Environment and Natural Resources, Honourable Patrick Kalifungwa for a

job well done. I wish to pay similar tribute to the President and the Secretariat of the International Institute for Peace through tourism (IIPT), and the management of Africa Travel Association (ATA) for their contribution to the success of this conference.

Chairperson, there is no doubt that Africa is making important strides to improve the living conditions of her people. But we need the assistance and cooperation of the International community at large in our quest to attain sustainable development. As of now, we have a serious debt burden that is inhibiting our efforts to succeed. I wish therefore to join the millions of voices around the world which have called for the total cancellation of the debt so that we can apply our finite resources to the sectors that need the injection of capital, especially agriculture, health and tourism industry.

Let this Conference be the turning point in our efforts to boost our tourism industries in Africa. Let this Conference inspire us to achieve progress in elaborating a viable vision for tourism for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond.

I wish you successful deliberations. God bless Africa.

I thank you for your attention.