



2023 LABOUR DAY COMMEMORATION

THEME: ACCELERATING JOB CREATION FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH

PRESS STATEMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday 1st May 2023

1st May of every year is recognized as a day to commemorate international labour day globally. This day is commemorated to celebrate the accomplishments of workers and the importance of labour in national development. The 2023 labour day is being commemorated under the theme **“Accelerating job creation for economic growth”**.

Zambia’s Vision 2030 seeks to turn the country into a **prosperous industrial middle-income nation that provides opportunities for improving the well-being of all citizens**. This year’s labour day theme aligns well with Vision 2030 and Government’s aspirations on socio-economic transformation for improved livelihoods through economic transformation and job creation as envisaged in the Eighth National Development Plan (8NDP) 2022-2026. The 2023 labour day theme acknowledges that there cannot be meaningful development without workers in the equation of production of goods and services, especially for countries like Zambia with a huge youth population dividend.

Zambia’s economic growth through transformation and job creation is anchored on advancements in industrialization and economic diversification driven by developments in the agriculture, mining, manufacturing and tourism sectors. This aspiration, therefore, requires a shift in labour from lower productive activities to higher productive activities between and within sectors enhanced by

advancements in technologies. It is important that economic transformation must be centred on industrialization with a great focus on value addition in economic sectors that are characterized by low capital requirements, labour intensive and whose production is for global markets consumption to create opportunities for meaningful job creation to cater for the youthful population of the country.

Enhancing job creation opportunities requires **Government and private sector efforts to create jobs**. It is acknowledged that **Government cannot create the much needed jobs for all citizens, but they have the greater mandate to provide an enabling environment that supports private sector driven economic transformation to generate job opportunities through the implementation of stable and consistent policies and tax options that do not stifle the growth of the private sector**. Innovation and value addition are the basis for greenfield investment in all sectors earmarked for job creation.

The promotion of value addition for both forward and backward linkages is crucial for the development of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) across industry, as they have the largest capacity for innovation and job creation. It remains critical that the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises, with support from partners expedite the **creation of a policy and legal framework that will push for development, mentorship and incubation of these micro, small and medium enterprises and address the constraints that impede enterprise growth while facilitating for the formalisation of MSMEs who have remained largely informal with limited access to skills development, technology and finance**.

Technological advancements play a key role in enhancing productivity. When coupled with the relevant skill set, the labour market can generate superior goods and services that drive the growth of the economy. Additionally, the country's low levels of productivity require educational reforms from primary to higher learning institutions in order to harness the appropriate technologies and skills that meet market demands. Although technological advancements present a variety of opportunities for green growth, creating safe workspaces is key for increased productivity. It is, therefore, important for Government to ensure that there are **strengthened operationalisation mechanisms for existing legislations, such as Occupational Health and Safety Act No. 36 of 2010**, to help both employers and employees identify the safety risks present in the workplace and take appropriate measures to adhere to health and safety standards.

In conclusion, as the country aspires to provide decent jobs for all through Foreign Direct Investments, it must also endeavour to ratify and domestic global treaties that support decent and safe jobs, such as the ILO Convention 190. This convention is critical as it enforces the elimination of violence and harassment in places of work.

PMRC wishes you all fruitful labour day celebrations.



SYDNEY MWAMBA
PMRC Executive Director

For more details, interviews or queries about this PMRC Media Statement, please contact:

POLICY MONITORING AND RESEARCH CENTRE

Corner of Nationalist & John Mbita Roads, opposite Ridgeway Campus gate

10101 Lusaka, Zambia

Tel: +260 211 269 717 | +260 979 015 660

<https://pmrczambia.com>