



## PRESS STATEMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Policy Monitoring and Research Centre (PMRC) is delighted to join the global community in observing World Environment Day on June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023. This year, the world acknowledges the importance of tackling plastic pollution through the theme **“Solutions to Plastic Pollution.”** PMRC recognises the critical need for collective effort and shared responsibility in addressing this challenge which poses significant risks to the environment and human health worldwide.

This year’s theme further highlights the urgent need for all stakeholders to take action towards reducing, reusing, and recycling plastic waste. Governments, businesses, and individuals worldwide must work together to find innovative solutions to this pressing issue. **This will require investments in new technologies, education and awareness campaigns, and a firm commitment to reducing our dependence on single-use plastics.**

Like many other countries, Zambia has recognised the urgent need to address the issue of plastic pollution. In recent years, the Government has taken several steps to reduce plastic waste and promote sustainability.

**One of the most significant steps taken by the Government has been the implementation of Statutory Instrument (SI) 65 of 2018, which bans the use of plastic carrier bags and plastic-related materials below 30 microns in thickness.** This ban has helped to reduce the amount of

plastic waste in the country and encouraged the use of reusable bags. **The Government has also introduced policies to encourage the use of eco-friendly materials in packaging and has urged businesses to adopt sustainable, eco-friendly practices such as recycling. Recycling presents a valuable opportunity for job creation and revenue generation.** By investing in recycling infrastructure and promoting recycling initiatives, the country can create new employment opportunities in waste management and recycling industries.

**Furthermore, recycling contributes to climate-friendly and sustainable solutions by reducing the extraction of raw materials, conserving energy, and minimising greenhouse gas emissions.**

Additionally, emphasising the use of glass as an alternative to plastic containers can be a significant step towards achieving these goals. Glass is a reusable and recyclable material that has a smaller environmental footprint compared to plastic. By opting for glass containers, both businesses and individuals have the opportunity to actively participate in the reduction of plastic waste and the advancement of a more sustainable future.

There are also several initiatives led by local organisations and communities in Zambia aimed at reducing plastic pollution. For example, the “Zero Waste Zambia” campaign encourages households and businesses to reduce their waste by practicing the 3Rs: reduce, reuse, and recycle. The campaign has gained significant support from local communities and has helped to raise awareness about the impact of plastic waste on the environment.

Zambia has also joined the global movement to combat plastic pollution by participating in international initiatives such as the **UN Environment Programme’s “Clean Seas” campaign**. This campaign aims to engage governments, businesses, and individuals in the fight against marine plastic pollution.

While much work is still to be done, Zambia’s efforts to address plastic pollution are commendable. By working together and taking action, we can all help to protect our environment and create a more sustainable future.



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