



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CTPD WELCOMES PARLIAMENTARY CONSULTATIONS ON THE DRAFT 8TH NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Centre for Trade Policy and Development (CTPD) welcomes the parliamentary consultations on the 8th National Development Plan (8NDP) as this is key in terms of making progress towards finalization of the plan, a process which is way overdue. We do acknowledge the need for the country to have a predictable and detailed development plan in place which can help the General Citizenry understand the aspirations of the Country in the next 5 years. We would like to take advantage of this process and urge Government to ensure that the consultations are done widely, it should be a preserve of only those that live in the line of rail to provide input, added to that is the need to provide alternatives to those constituencies who may be challenged such the deaf.

To provide a background, Development planning in Zambia stems from as far back as 1966, when the country had its first national development plan. This planning was, and still is important in realizing socio-economic priorities for the country especially as it aligns within global and regional frameworks such as the Vision 2030 and the African Union agenda 2023, frameworks to which Zambia is party. Currently in Zambia, the national development plans are in line with the provisions of the National Planning and Budgeting Act No. 1 of 2020 and the National Planning and Budgeting policy of 2014.

A review of the draft 8NDP by the Centre has revealed that Government is proposing to prioritize decentralization, primarily in regards to the strategic objective 4 of the draft policy, on improved policy and governance. CTPD is of the view that this is commendable and is too, something that is long overdue. The Centre remains concerned that the agenda on decentralization has been on paper for many years but less has been done to actualize this. It will be very cardinal that through the 8NDP, this is prioritized even in regards to budgetary

allocations to this agenda. The 8NDP promises to fully implement decentralization by devolution, which will entail transfer of functions for centralized pattern of decision making to a local level as well. While this is a good move that should be applauded, CTPD recommends a rapid implementation of the same to stimulate local development that is locally driven. CTPD has noted with concern prior the levels of inequality that have continued to impede on development given the exclusion of a majority vulnerable from key economic sectors such as Agriculture, Mining and Trade even while the predecessor development plan promised “leaving no one behind”.

The Constituency Development Fund (CDF) is a stepping stone towards decentralization. CDF has for a long time been a way of bringing development closer to the local people and has been a vehicle for governments to champion the agenda. CTPD advises that the CDF provision should be backed by a strong legal framework that can ensure that resources that are provided are not at the will of an administration but for it to become a legal process where every Government that comes in place should ensure that more resources are allocated towards the grassroots.

As the country aims to move towards economic transformation in this sense, there is need for key legislative provisions that provide for management of public resources such as the Public Finance Management Act, the National Planning and Budgeting Act and the Public Procurement Act to be implemented. These were a key part of the predecessor development plan, but their enforcement remained weak. There is therefore still need to further strengthen these pieces of legislation to ensure that they are implemented and enforced accordingly.

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Editor's Note

The Centre for Trade Policy and Development (CTPD) is a not-for-profit, membership based trade policy and development think tank. The organization was established in 1999 and existed as the civil society trade network (CSTNZ), until 2009 when it was rebranded as the Centre for Trade Policy and Development (CTPD).

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The mandate of CTPD is to influence pro-poor trade and investment reforms at national, regional and multilateral levels as well as facilitate the participation of various stakeholders including member organizations in ensuring that trade is used as a tool for poverty eradication.

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