

## **Caleb M Fundanga: The role of professionals in economic development**

Remarks by Mr Caleb M Fundanga, Governor of the Bank of Zambia, at the Annual National Development Conference of the Zambia Institute for Policy Analysis and Research, Lusaka, 28 November 2009.

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**Hon Minister of Finance and National Planning, Dr Situmbeko Musokotwane**  
**The Permanent Secretary Budget and Economic affairs, Mr Emmanuel Ngulube**  
**ZIPAR Executive Director – Mwilola Imakando**  
**Distinguished Guests,**  
**Members of the Press**  
**Ladies and gentlemen,**

It is indeed a pleasure for me to be invited to this very important gathering to give a Scope of the Conference.

The central theme of my address today is the role that professionals are expected to play in economic development in general and in the provision of public goods and services in particular. You will agree with me that the levels of professionalism in our country has somewhat declined in the recent past. Nowadays, it is not rare to hear of corrupt practices and unethical conduct in the both the public and private sectors. This has no doubt compromised professionalism.

**Ladies and Gentlemen**, as you are aware, professionalism entails possessing specialist knowledge and following a standard of conduct based on ethics that govern the use of this knowledge when providing a service to the public. Professionals provide essential and valuable services to any society. It is for this reason that the public depend on them more and more as economies advance. Therefore, professional status is an implied social contract to provide a service over and above normal duties. In this regard, a professional is viewed as one who carries additional moral responsibility and is honest, objective, impartial and with high integrity.

**Mr Chairman**, the importance of a professional civil service in Zambia cannot be overemphasised. If we are to succeed economically as well as socially, we need to demonstrate appropriate levels of professionalism. A professional is open to views of others and are objective and their decisions are made in the best interest of the country. As professional in Zambia we need to evaluate our performance and aim to constantly improve. We need to see ourselves as part of the solution rather than the problem. Further, it is important to realise that civil service is a key component of Government as it supports the formulation and implementation of government policies and service delivery to the public. A professional civil service also ensures that government objectives and goals are achieved in an effective and efficient manner thus assuring confidence to the public.

In order to carry out their duties, professionals need to be guided by a code of conduct which stipulates the core values and responsibilities of the profession. The code of conduct is usually developed by the profession to guide and to prevent exploitative behaviour and to preserve the integrity of the profession. The code sets a framework for meeting standards and provides disciplinary guidelines for unprofessional behaviour. However, it must be understood that codes of conduct are not only meant to serve as a disciplinary guidebook but also outline ideal ethical standards. In order to be effective, Codes of Conduct should be understood and used by all professionals in their day to day activities.

It is therefore pertinent for the civil service to develop appropriate codes of conduct that meet the expectations of the public. It is the duty of Government to ensure that the civil service is aware of this code of conduct and its values. In advanced countries such as Japan, Italy and Singapore the importance of the code of conduct is strongly upheld at all levels of the public

service. This has contributed to a strong, independent and impartial civil service, whatever their political persuasions, that is able to serve different governments in line with the requirements of the code of conduct.

In order to enhance professionalism in both public and private sectors, it is key that professions demonstrate high ethical standards and values. I therefore urge all of us professionals gathered here today to take ethics seriously in order to enhance efficient delivery of services to our people. A robust and strong level of ethics can be achieved by providing ethics training and sensitisation as a component of continuous professional development. Although qualified professionals may be competent in their fields, it is vital to test their ethical knowledge. Equally there is need to promote Integrity at all levels of civil service.

***Ladies and Gentlemen***, our country needs professionals with high levels of social and moral awareness so that all of us are aware of the moral obligations and potential impact of our thinking, decisions and actions. We need to be good role models for others in behaviour, attitude and relationships. Let us endeavour to act in a way that is professional and that retains the confidence of the public at all times.

***I thank you for your attention.***