



Think Ahead



ZAMBIA INSTITUTE OF CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

**SPEECH BY THE ZICA PRESIDENT MRS YANDE SIAME MWENYE AT THE
OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE ANNUAL BUSINESS CONFERENCE HELD AT
AVANI VICTORIA FALLS RESORT IN LIVINGSTONE ON 27TH AUGUST 2025**

SALUTATIONS

- Guest of Honour, Hon. Chipoka Mulenga MP, Minister of Commerce Trade and Industry,
- Her Worship, the Mayor of Livingstone, Ms. Constance Nalishebo Muleabai,
- ACCA Zambia Panel Chairperson, Ms Prudence Muchinouta,
- CIMA Zambia Network Panel Chairperson, Mr. Mpangwe Kasonso,
- ZICA Council Members,
- ZICA CEO Mr. Anthony Bwembya,
- Head of CIMA Zambia Mr. Gordian Bowa,
- Head of ACCA Zambia Ms. Janice Matwi,
- Distinguished Resource persons,
- ZICA, CIMA and ACCA Management and Staff,
- All delegates present,
- Members of the press,
- Ladies and Gentlemen,
- Good morning!

It is my honour to welcome you to this year's Annual Business Conference. it is always gratifying to gather as professionals with a shared commitment to excellence, innovation, and resilience.

To our distinguished Guest of Honour, Hon. Chipoka Mulenga, MP thank you most sincerely for gracing us with your presence. I take this opportunity to thank the Conference organising committee comprising ZICA, ACCA and CIMA, the business community, our sponsors, all professionals and delegates present for your unwavering support. Your dedication reflects the very spirit of transformation and agility that our theme embodies.

The theme for this conference is- “Building Transformational Business Strategies: Leading Through Change with Agility & Strategy”—is a bold declaration, it reminds us that in times of uncertainty, true leaders arise, they don't wait for change—they drive it.

As the great management thinker **Peter Drucker** once said:

“The greatest danger in times of turbulence is not the turbulence—it is to act with yesterday's logic.”

“The best way to predict the future is to create it”

Let us all strive to break free from yesterday's logic and build the future with courage, creativity, and clarity. We must ask ourselves: Are we building businesses that can withstand the storm—or ones that can dance in the rain?

Guest of Honour, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In crafting Transformational Business Strategies, our focus should not be about change; it should also be about purposeful evolution. It requires us to rethink traditional models, embrace innovation, and foster cultures that are not only responsive but proactive. As leaders, we must ask: Are our strategies built to withstand disruption? Are we agile enough to pivot when needed? Are we strategic enough to lead with vision? Transformation is not a destination—it is a journey. It demands vision, resilience, and a willingness to reinvent. It's about turning challenges into opportunities and daring to lead where others hesitate.

As leaders, we need to commit to equipping our people with the right tools, knowledge, and networks needed to thrive in this dynamic landscape. Through professional development, thought leadership, and advocacy, we aim to be a catalyst for sustainable business transformation in Zambia and beyond. My personal desire is that this conference will be more than just another gathering—I am of the firm belief that it will be a launchpad. A place where ideas are born, partnerships are forged, and strategies are refined. Let us challenge each other to think boldly, act decisively, and lead responsibly.

Honourable Minister,

On behalf of the accounting profession, I wish to extend our commitment to working collaboratively with the Ministry of Commerce in advancing Zambia's transformational business agenda. As Accounting professionals, we possess a unique blend of financial expertise, ethical leadership, and strategic insight that provides a 360 degree view of the companies or organisations that we operate in and with that, we are able to significantly contribute to:

1. Policy and Regulatory Support

Our profession is well-positioned to assist in shaping and reviewing policies that promote transparency, accountability, and inclusive growth, especially in areas such as SME development, digital finance, and tax reform. You may wish to know Hon. Minister that the Institute has been working with the Ministry of Commerce on matters concerning the African Continental Free Trade Agreement Technical Working Group on free movement of goods and services. This has been going on for a few years and is aimed at ensuring the smooth movement of goods and services in all countries that subscribed to the agreement. The Institute as a regulator of the accountancy profession in Zambia is fully involved in the development of mutual recognition agreements for COMESA and SADC so that accountancy qualifications and professionals can move freely across the different countries. This we believe will help in the economic growth of Africa while ensuring no country becomes disadvantaged. The Mutual Recognition Agreement will ensure offers and requests are aligned for all participating countries to avoid trade barriers. We are thankful for the guidance your team thus far, and we hope as engagements continue, we shall be drawing closer to the realisation of a true Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement.

2. Championing Green and Sustainable Business Practices

there is no secret that we have all experienced the effects of climate change in our country. As a profession, we are ready to support businesses in adopting environmentally responsible models through sustainability reporting, carbon accounting, and ESG compliance frameworks. It is important that as a country, we move towards best practices in environmental conservation to ensure posterity. Sustainability should not only be heard but it should be seen to be done starting from a household level. It is true that if we continue living unsustainably,

our home on earth will one day no longer be able to sustain life and therefore we must all be responsible citizens at protecting our environment.

3. Innovation and Digital Transformation

As Accountants we have been ahead as professionals in the use of AI and are increasingly leveraging digital tools to improve business efficiency. It goes without saying that we must all know which tools we can harness to use to make our workflows easier for optimum delivery. We therefore continue to urge our members to embrace AI and other technologies enhanced productivity.

4. Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration

We welcome opportunities to participate in cross-sectoral platforms, working alongside government, private sector, academia, and civil society to co-create solutions that drive economic transformation.

We believe that this partnership can accelerate Zambia's journey toward a resilient, inclusive, and sustainable economy. We look forward to engaging further and contributing meaningfully to national development.

Honourable Minister, the Annual Business Conference is an engagement that as the name implies takes place every year to bring to together captains of industry to help us redefine how we can transform businesses, livelihoods and engagements to ensure formidable economic resilience and growth. This event which brings together professionals from various sectors across the country. We are certain that with your support and continued professional collaborations, this platform will thrive but most importantly ensure enhancement of knowledge and zeal for professionals to make a difference in their areas of operation for sustainable business growth.

As I alluded to earlier, the theme speaks to what we all hope to achieve by the close of this conference. In this room, Honourable Minister, are multifaceted leaders poised to make a difference. As professionals, we understand that leadership is a privilege. Therefore, we are equal to the call to arise, stand up and show up whenever we are called upon to assist in the development of our beloved country, Zambia. Leadership calls for resilience and forthrightness and with this I urge each of us to walk the talk.

As I conclude, ladies and gentlemen please be encouraged to engage fully, share openly, and leave here inspired to build strategies that are not only transformational but enduring. Together, let us lead through change—with agility, with strategy, and with purpose.

thank you

It is now my honour to invite the Guest of Honour to deliver his keynote address.

Honourable Minister.