



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA



Permanent Mission of the Republic of Zambia to the United Nations

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*Media Statement*

*For Immediate Release*

**MPs urge ethnic balancing of political parties to avoid conflicts**

**NEW YORK, Friday, December 7, 2012** – About 200 parliamentarians from around the world, meeting for their annual hearing at UN Headquarters, have called for ethnic balancing of political parties to avoid conflicts, according to a Zambian legislator.

Itezhi Tezhi Member of Parliament Greyford Monde, who is also first vice-president of the Zambian Group of Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), represented the country at the two-day Annual Parliamentary Hearing where legislators discussed the role of Parliaments in conflict prevention, reconciliation and peace building.

Mr Monde explained that the focus of this year's IPU/UN meeting was to find means of avoiding violence before, during and after elections.

According to Mr Monde, the international community was concerned that political parties usually fueled conflicts.

“For example, in yesterday's sitting one of the issues that came up was that political parties must balance the participation of their members in terms of ethnical and regional groupings. The cracks will always begin with ethnical, regional and even gender. So it was noted that it is high time political parties involve regional groupings,” Mr Monde said. “Tribal and ethnical balancing was one of the key issues and it is an important point that was addressed.”

Mr Monde added: “For example in Kenya there is a law they are trying to create to say that ‘for a political party to be registered it must meet a certain number of citizens in terms of recruitment, out of which there must be people coming from the entire country’.”

He said regional or tribal inclined parties were among major causes of conflicts. Mr Monde said there was also emphasis on having more women participation in politics, and acknowledgment that the womenfolk were best tools in brokering peace.

“In fact, if there are conflicts, it’s usually the women and children that are affected, so it is important that the women are also involved in politics,” Mr Monde said.

The Itezhi Tezhi legislator said the Parliamentarians demanded that the international community – particularly regional, continental and international bodies – must not be biased when resolving conflicts but be fair and transparent.

He noted that Zambia stood out as an icon of peace in southern Africa and must maintain that status.

“We commend the Government for the way that the Executive has been working with the Parliament of Zambia in harmony without any challenges,” Mr Monde said.

Visiting the Permanent Mission of Zambia to the United Nations, Mr Monde met with Zambia’s Permanent Representative to the United Nations Ambassador Dr Mwaba Kasese-Bota, her deputy Ms Irene Tembo and other diplomatic staff.

IPU president Abdelwahad Radi, UN General Assembly president Vuk Jeremi , UN Deputy Secretary General Jan Eliasson and Ivory Coast President Alassane Ouattara, high level UN officials, experts and member States participated in the event.

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Issued by:

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**Captions:**

Itezhi Tezhi Member of Parliament, Greyford Monde, at the Permanent Mission of Zambia to the United Nations in New York on December 7, 2012. Mr Monde attended the IPU Annual Parliamentary Hearing at UN headquarters. PHOTO | CHIBAULA D. SILWAMBA

Itezhi Tezhi Member of Parliament, Greyford Monde, and Zambia’s UN Ambassador Dr Mwaba Kasese-Bota at the Permanent Mission of Zambia to the United Nations in New York, on December 7, 2012. Mr Monde attended the IPU Annual Parliamentary Hearing at UN headquarters. PHOTO | CHIBAULA D. SILWAMBA