



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA



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Media Statement

For Immediate Release

Zambia, Canada introduce anti-forced marriage resolution at UN

UNITED NATIONS, Friday, October 25, 2013 – Zambia and Canada have co-chaired and co-sponsored a United Nations draft resolution that seeks to end child, early and forced marriages worldwide.

The draft resolution was presented to the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural (Third) Committee of the UN on Thursday.

Introducing the draft resolution, Zambia's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Dr Mwaba Kasese-Bota said child, early and forced marriages are a global challenge that must be eliminated.

She said child, early and forced marriages were explicit violations of the rights of the child, and an absolute impediment to full realisation of the girls and young women's potential of adulthood productivity.

The Ambassador said children must enjoy their childhood and their rights as enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

"A child is always a child and never a small adult," said Dr Kasese-Bota, adding that children forced into marriage were exposed to maternal health complications, Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) including HIV.

The Zambian envoy urged UN Member States to support the resolution, which is expected to save more than 142 million girls that could be married off in the next 10 years.

A forced marriage is where one or both people do not consent to the marriage and pressure, or abuse, is used.

According to UNICEF's estimates, over 64 million women aged 20–24 years were married or in union before the age of 18. Child marriage is most common in south Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, according to UNICEF – a UN agency that promotes the wellbeing of children globally.

Issued by:

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