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## Statement by Hon. Ms. Nelly Kashumba Butete Mutti, Speaker of the National Assembly of Zambia

### Closing session of the 5<sup>th</sup> UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries

Doha, 9 March 2023

President,

I am Nelly Kashumba Butete Mutti, Speaker of the National Assembly of Zambia. It is my honour today to speak on behalf of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the convener of the parliamentary track to the LDC 5 conference.

Aside from our contribution to two preparatory regional meetings and to this conference, where some 70 parliamentarians from 30 countries participated, the centrepiece of the parliamentary track consists of the official Parliamentary Message that the Governing Council of the IPU adopted in November 2021.

We have already delivered this message to the organizers and we ask that it be placed on the official record of the conference.

Our Parliamentary Message provides a clear vision of what needs to change if we want the LDCs to finally rise up the development ladder. In particular, the Message emphasizes the need for deep reforms in global economic governance so as to level a playing field that to this day remains heavily biased in favour of the more advanced economies.

At the same time, the Parliamentary Message makes it clear that the LDCs need to pay greater attention to their domestic governance, by preventing or quelling conflict, and by stimulating economic and trade synergies among themselves.

Greater sharing of experiences and mutual learning among LDCs, capitalizing on local knowledge, investments, and institutional reforms, provide a critical path forward.

The LDCs don't want charity, and certainly not "aid" that does not truly benefit them. They want to enjoy their right to development as recognized by the United Nations. They ask for more solidarity and support according to the principle that the well-being of one depends on the well-being of all of us as members of the international community.

The need for more global solidarity toward the LDCs is particularly evident today with regard to the exploding climate crisis – a crisis not of their own making, but for which the LDCs are paying a heavy price in human, economic and environmental terms. The Parliamentary Forum that took place on the eve of this conference, on 4 March, reinforced many of the points conveyed by our Parliamentary Message. Among other

things, it made it very clear that the LDC agenda represented by the Doha Programme of Action is not marginal but rather *central* to all our work for the SDGs. We cannot hope to realize the SDGs globally without dramatically improving conditions in the 46 Least Developed Countries where 1.1 billion people live.

The role of parliaments and parliamentarians will be key in all of this. Parliaments must hold governments accountable for the implementation of the DPOA, making sure that *all* governments, not just in the LDCs, internalize this new plan through institutional and policy reforms. All acts of legislation, including the national budget, need to be attuned to the relevant provisions of the DPOA in tandem with the SDGs. Indeed, the DPOA must be a global agenda just like the SDGs.

Through their representative, legislative and budgetary functions, parliaments have the bounden duty to contribute robustly to the strengthening of governance all around and in improving coherence across economic, environmental and social justice policies. To this effect, we need to work harder on making parliaments more effective, particularly in the LDCs.

This effort must begin by increasing the representation of women and youth in parliament, as well as by stimulating greater parliamentary engagement with civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders. This said, multi-stakeholder platforms should never substitute for constitutional responsibilities that rest exclusively with parliaments.

As they lack sufficient capacities and political autonomy to fulfil their role, LDC parliaments need considerably more technical and financial assistance than is currently provided by development partners.

Mr. President,

My fellow parliamentarians and I have learned a great deal from this conference. I have been impressed with the rich programme of events and initiatives during these past few days.

This gives me hope that all of us will go home today with a greater sense of purpose and responsibility toward the Least Developed Countries.

Let's get down to work to turn words into action.

Thank you.