

INTERNATIONAL AWARD FOR YOUNG PEOPLE-ZAMBIA

**REMARKS BY THE BOARD CHAIRPERSON, DR CALEB M FUNDANGA, AT THE
OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE AWARDS LEADER TRAINING WORKSHOP**

14 JULY 2010

COMMONWEALTH YOUTH PROGRAMME REGIONAL CENTRE FOR AFRICA

LUSAKA

- **The Minister of Sport, Youth and Child Development, Hon. Kenneth Chipungu, M.P**
- **The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Sport, Youth and Child Development, Mr. Teddy Mulonga**
- **The Director, International Award for Young People Africa Region, Mr. Edwin Kimani**
- **The Regional Director, Commonwealth Youth Programme, Regional Centre for Africa, Mr. James Odit**
- **The Chairperson, National Youth Development Council, Mrs. Monica Shinkanga**
- **The Acting Council Secretary, National Youth Development Council, Mr. Damiano Chishimba**
- **Distinguished Resource Persons**
- **Representatives from International Organisations**
- **Representatives from Partner Organisations**
- **Distinguished Participants**
- **Members of the Press;**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen.**

I am very honoured to speak at the opening of this important Awards Leaders Training Workshop this morning. On behalf of the Board of Trustees of the International Award for Young People in Zambia and indeed on my own behalf, I wish to welcome all the participants to this workshop. I also wish to welcome in a special way the distinguished officials from the Regional office of the International Award for Young People Africa who have come to share their knowledge and experience on this important Programme. I welcome you all to Zambia and to this friendly city of Lusaka in particular. We are indeed honoured by your presence here today and we are grateful to the Regional Office for the opportunity to host this awards leaders training workshop.

Honourable Minister, As you may be aware, the Award Programme is an exciting self development programme available to all young people aged 14 to 25 worldwide that equip them with life skills to make a difference to themselves, their communities and the world. The Programme comprises four components which allow the programme participants to set themselves challenging personal goals including:

1. **Service** – this component encourages the youth to have a sense of responsibility to the community through service projects such as HIV/AIDS awareness programmes, voluntary service in hospitals, conservation work or specialized training such as life saving.
2. **Skills** – this component encourages the development of personal interests and practical life skills such as arts and crafts, computing and music.
3. **Physical recreation** – this encourages improved physical performance, perseverance, and a healthy living.
4. **Adventurous journey** – this component is aimed at encouraging a spirit of adventure and discovery while undertaking a journey in a group. Participants are expected to develop an understanding of the environment and the importance of team work.

Upon completion of the requirements, participants attain Awards at any of the three levels, namely **Bronze**, **Silver** and **Gold**. An additional requirement at Gold Level is the **Residential Project** which broadens participants' experience through involvement with others in a residential setting.

In this regard, the Award Programme is no doubt a very strong compliment to the school curriculum. Ever since its launch, the Award has appealed to schools worldwide with its concept of individual challenge that encourages young people to take responsibility for their own development. Infact the Programme is in line with the goals of our education policy, "Educating Our Future" aimed at producing a learner capable of developing an analytical, innovative, creative and constructive mind as well as demonstrating free expression of one's own ideas and exercising tolerance for other people's views.

The Award therefore enables students to achieve the following:

- Gain recognition for extra/co—curricular activities;
- Improve their personal development by learning new skills such as time management, team work and problem solving;
- Build their confidence by trying something new;
- Make a positive impact on their community through volunteering; and
- Undertake activities that support applications for college, university or employment.

Further, it is important to realize that the Programme is not exclusive to school going pupils. It is also applicable and relevant to all young people, regardless of their background and circumstances. Through the challenging activities in the four components I alluded to earlier, youth development issues such as employment and health are clearly addressed. The Award therefore contributes to the attainment of the goals of our National Youth Policy.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, you may also wish to note that the Award programme was first introduced in the United Kingdom in 1956 as the "Duke of Edinburgh's Award" with the aim of motivating young people to become involved in a balanced programme of voluntary development activities.

In Zambia, a strong Award programme existed as early as in the 1980s under the name “President’s Youth Award” whose Patron was the first Republican President, Dr. Kenneth Kaunda. Deserving young people received Awards from the President on Youth Day.

Although the Concept of the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award was introduced to Zambia in September 1981 through an All Africa workshop held at this particular venue, it was in 1989 when the Zambian government finally decided to adopt the idea and to integrate it into the President’s Youth Award of Zambia. Zambia was given a provisional membership of the International Award Association at the 4th Award Forum held in 1991 in Hong Kong. The Programme operated under the National Youth Development Council.

Unfortunately, the National Award ceased operations in the mid 1990s partly due to the restructuring of the National Youth Development Council. Since then, the Programme has been offered by a few private schools as Independent Operators reporting directly to the International Secretariat in London.

Honourable Minister, through the efforts of your Ministry, the National Youth Development Council and the Commonwealth Youth Programme, with support from the International Award Association, Zambia re-joined the association in October 2009. This means that the country is now a National Award Authority and all institutions wishing to offer the Programme have to go through the national office. We are certain that the establishment of a national office will enable more young people access the Programme. It is for this reason that we feel that, this training has come at a very opportune time for Zambia.

As a new National Award Authority, training of Award Leaders is one of our priorities in our quest to extend the Award. Although the Award can be offered by various institutions with access to young people aged between 14-25, Zambia has decided to pilot the programme in schools. In this regard, we have invited teachers from both private and government schools as well the University of Zambia to participate at this workshop in order for them to understand how best to disseminate and equip the youth with the much needed life skills .

As a board, we are greatly indebted to the government through the Ministry of Sport, Youth and Child Development and the Commonwealth Youth Programme Regional Centre for Africa who have supported the Programme from its inception. We call upon other development agencies to support this worthy cause. We are also indebted to the National Youth Development Council, for hosting the Programme

Let me end by once again, thanking the Africa Regional Office of the International Award Association for having given us the opportunity to host this Anglophone Award Leaders Training Workshop.

I thank you for your attention.