



**Speech by Commonwealth Secretary-General,  
The Rt Hon Patricia Scotland QC, at the  
Inauguration Ceremony of President Hakainde Hichilema  
*Lusaka, 24 August 2021***

Mr President,

Madam Vice President,

Former President His Excellency Edgar Lungu

Excellencies,

Distinguished guests,

Zambians here present and those watching virtually from  
around the world.

Today is a great day;

It is a great day for peace;

It is a great day for Zambians;

It is a great day for Africa;

it is a great day for the Commonwealth;

and it is a great day for all those who love peace, good  
governance and the rule of law, which is embedded in our  
concept of what makes a true democracy.



It is a great day for every member of our family of nations who has thirsted for peace, despaired of peace, hoped for peace.

It is my singular honour and privilege to be here today, as Secretary-General of the Commonwealth family of 54 nations representing 2.5 billion people, sixty percent under the age of 30, all of whom are committed to the values expressed in our charter.

I want to use this opportunity to offer my profound congratulations to the people of Zambia and to President Hakainde Hichilema on his inauguration as the 7th President of Zambia.

Many feared that this day would never come. That a peaceful election in Zambia was no longer possible. That It was an aspiration which could not and would not be fulfilled.

Feared that there was little upon which it could be based - saved unrealistic and unachievable hope.



Things had gone too far; the divisions were too deep - and there was no evidence to sustain the hope for peace.

Feared It would take a miracle.

But what is a miracle?

what creates it?

what makes it possible?

It is people.

People who are able to see how life could and should be.

People who have the willingness and courage to fight for that which looks impossible but who know that it only seems impossible until it is done, and then the impossible becomes the inevitable.

The seeds of this miraculous peace was sown four years ago.

When two Zambian statesmen were entrusted with the hopes and aspirations of the Zambian people decided that their belief in God; in integrity, unity and safety of their country was more important than self-interest and they both decided to put Zambia and Zambians first. They both faced a choice, and they



chose peace. And so did other Zambian parliamentarians, civil society groups, church bodies, corporate community and Zambian citizens.

The international and multilateral bodies, in partnership with the friends of Zambia, stood together with them; claimed peace; believed in peace; worked for peace; uniting all men and women of goodwill; to carve a space for peace out of the seemingly impenetrable granite surface of disbelief, narrow self-interest, ill will and apathy.

The flame of peace, which was set alight by President Dr Keneth David Kaunda, which was entrusted to each of his successors, nurtured and kept alive through some of the darkest of times by both former President Lungu and President Hichilema has brought us here today.

Zambia's 2021 election will go down in history as an election with no losers. There were two winners. President Hichilema



won the vote, and President Lungu won the hearts of every person who loves democracy and peace by gracefully transferring democratic leadership and extending his brotherly hand to President Hichilema.

I am grateful that the Commonwealth has been allowed to be part of Zambia's remarkable journey since independence.

This is indeed a high moment for the Commonwealth, Africa and the whole of the international community. Everyone has played their part. Zambia's democracy is a feat to be admired and celebrated, and one which we hope to see emulated in the wider Commonwealth family.

Mr President, the Commonwealth salutes you and stands ready to walk with you, your government and the people of Zambia, as you strive to realise your vision of a prosperous, peaceful and proud Zambia, anchored on love, national unity and mutual understanding.



Your Excellencies, allow me to conclude my speech by echoing and seeking inspiration from this beautiful country's national anthem.

*Stand and sing of Zambia, proud and free,*

*Land of work and joy in unity,*

*Victors in the struggle for the right,*

*We've won freedom's fight.*

*All one, strong and free.*

*Africa is our own motherland,*

*Fashion'd with and blessed by God's good hand,*

*Let us all her people join as one,*

*Brothers under the sun.*

*All one, strong and free.*

God bless Zambia.

God bless the seventh President of Zambia Hakainde Hichilema

