

SPEECH BY

**THE MINISTER OF MINES, NATURAL
RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT,**

HONOURABLE H.F. CHMUNTHU BANDA, MP

AT THE

**LAUNCH OF CEPA PUBLICATION ON
LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL
REPRESENTATION**

TO BE HELD AT

**THE MALAWI INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT
(MIM)**

IN LILONGWE, 21ST APRIL 2006

- **The Master of Ceremonies**
- **The Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources**
- **Members of the Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture and the Environment**
- **The Secretary for Mines, Natural Resources and Environment**
- **The Executive Director of CEPA**
- **Members of the Press**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen**

It is my honour and privilege to welcome you all to the Malawi Institute of Management (MIM) campus to this important function where the publication on Representing Constituents Servicing Nature will be officially launched. This is an important publication to

stakeholders in the environment sector particularly for Parliamentarians, government institutions and civil society organisations dealing in issues of natural resources and environmental management and of course the general public at large.

Ladies and Gentlemen, you are no doubt aware that books are a reliable form through which information is passed to the general public. They educate and preserve important information for use both now and the future. This initiative by the Centre for Environmental Policy and Advocacy strikes one of the key policy objectives in our National Environmental Policy which is to increase public and political awareness on matters of the environment and natural resources. We believe this has a bearing on the understanding of the need for sustainable

environmental protection, conservation and management. I therefore trust that the publication I will be launching today will assist in that regard.

I am informed that this publication presents issues of legislative representation. Mostly this involves political representation which is the responsibility of political parties, especially legislators who have the formal constitutional responsibilities to represent the electorate and formulate and influence policy and legal norms for good governance.

For many young democracies, including Malawi, this latter task has traditionally been the responsibility of the civil service through relevant government departments, but as political tolerance and understanding deepens, legislators are becoming increasingly involved

to ensure they are identified with their constituents.

You may recall ladies and gentlemen that in Malawi, the Constitution and the National Assembly Standing Orders provide the powers and functions of the National Assembly and section 66 of the Constitution as read with section 8 provides the representative functions of Parliament which is underscoring the fact that this is a very important function in governance.

This book provides an analysis of legislative representation in Malawi based on research conducted in the Southern Region of the country. It provides an account of the experiences, approaches and outcomes of legislator representation in various contexts among which relates to fuel wood harvesting

and the provision of alternative sources of income to fuel wood for local communities to discourage unsustainable harvesting of fuel wood in a constituency.

Recognizing that history plays an important role there is a section in the book that considers some conceptual analysis of legislative representation in the context of the constitutional framework in Malawi. There is an inclusion of a historical analysis of legislative representation in Malawi from the colonial, independence and the current governance system. The aim here is to provide a framework of the state of knowledge and outline the factors that have shaped legislative representation in the country to date.

In addition there is a section on constituency views on legislative representation in the case

study constituency This is an analysis of the specific incentives and disincentives for legislator behavior in the constituency.

It is against this background that I would like to urge all government officials, most especially members of parliament, members of the civil society organizations, academicians and members of general public that have an interest in issues of the environment and natural resources management to read this book. Let us also seriously consider the recommendations that have been advanced. I further wish to urge everyone to actively participate in other activities CEPA has that relate to legislative representation.

At this juncture , permit me on behalf of my Ministry to extend my appreciation to the

World Resources Institute for their continued support to CEPA and indeed to the government of Malawi through the activities of CEPA. I am also grateful to representatives of various NGOs, academic and other institutions represented here and all other government departments under my Ministry and the other Ministries for their continued support to this work.

With these few remarks, Ladies and gentlemen, it is my pleasure and singular honour to declare the publication entitled “Representing Constituents Servicing Nature: The Role of an MP in Environment and Natural Resources Management in Malawi” officially launched.

Thank you for your attention and may God bless you.

