

DR. SEBASTIAN C. KOPULANDE



Dr. Sebastian Kopulande is the Co-Founder and President of VisionAfric Development, a Non-Governmental Organization focused on the implementation of the flagship projects of the African Union's Agenda 2063 and other programs and projects that will help accelerate development of the African continent. He is also the Founder and Chief Executive Officer of the Zambian International Trade & Investment Centre (ZITIC). ZITIC is a private business Consulting firm focused on contributing to socio-economic development through the promotion and facilitation of local and international trade and investment in Zambia and other African countries under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The company provides consultancy and other support services to foreign and local investors and facilitates Zambian participation in international trade and investment events. ZITIC has led trade missions to numerous countries such as the USA, India, China, Malaysia, Botswana, Zimbabwe and South Africa. ZITIC supports international trade through promotion of export of Zambian products and representation of foreign companies wishing to offer their products or services on the Zambian market. The company promotes development of small and medium enterprises through various services such as sourcing trade and project finance for business growth, training and facilitating access to both local and export markets. He is the Founder and President of the Zambia-China Business and Friendship Association (ZCBFA) and Chairman of the Luapula Investment Cooperative Society (LICS).

Dr. Kopulande is a Rhodes Scholar and holds a PhD in Management with specialization in Leadership, a Master of Philosophy (M.Phil) in Management Studies from the University of Oxford, United Kingdom and a B.A degree (with Distinction) from the University of Zambia. In 1993 he was elected as a PEW Economic Freedom Fellow at Georgetown University, USA where he studied Transitional Economics. Because of his commitment to ethical service in both the private and public sectors, Dr. Kopulande was conferred as Fellow of the Institute of Directors of Zambia (FIoDz) on 9th February 2018.

In his professional career, Dr. Kopulande has worked as a Management Consultant for Deloitte and Touche and held senior management positions in various companies in Zambia. He served as Board Chairman on several Government-owned companies and as a keen advocate of good Corporate Governance, he served on the inaugural Board of the Institute of Directors of Zambia when it was just founded.

He has very rich experience in Government, having served as Director of Industry in the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry, Comptroller/Permanent Secretary in the office of the Republican President at State House under late President Frederick Chiluba and later as Special Assistant to the President (Special Duties), the late Dr. Levy P. Mwanawasa. Dr. Kopulande's responsibilities included advising the Zambian Head of State on a variety of national and international issues especially those related to economic development and trade and investment. He was also responsible for writing the President's speeches on different local and international issues.

He has a trail of major achievements in public office and is credited with numerous milestone innovations in policy development and infrastructure projects that he helped initiate. These innovations include the conceptualization and establishment of the Zambia Development Agency (ZDA) from the amalgamation of various Government business support institutions; the conceptualization of the Multi-Facility Economic Zones (MFEZ) Policy to stimulate manufacturing activities in the country, the conceptualization and establishment of the Citizens Economic Empowerment Commission (CEEC); the conceptualization and establishment of the Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit (DMMU); the conceptualization and establishment of the Presidential Housing Initiative (PHI), etc.

Dr. Kopulande has extensive experience in economic development matters, particularly in the field of industrial and trade policy, economic policy formulation, small enterprise development, investment promotion and facilitation and creation of business-friendly environment. He has been actively involved with promoting Zambian entrepreneurship, private sector growth and attracting foreign investment as well as helping foreign companies to establish operations in Zambia.

On 11th August 2016, he was elected as the first Member of Parliament for Chembe Constituency in Luapula Province, northern Zambia under the Patriotic Front (PF) ticket and served until 12th May 2021. Upon entering Parliament, he was appointed as Zambia's Representative to the African, Caribbean and Pacific-European Union Joint Parliamentary Assembly (ACP-EU JPA) where he was also elected as Rapporteur on Aid and Development Effectiveness. In February 2018, he was appointed as Member of the ACP Working Group on Post-Cotonou to define future relations between ACP countries and the European Union following the expiration of the Cotonou Agreement in 2020. On 11th October 2018, he was again elected as Rapporteur on "The Strategic significance and Dimension of the ACP-EU partnership".

As Member of Parliament, Dr. Kopulande served on the Committee of National Economy, Trade and Labour Matters, the Committee on Cabinet Affairs and the Standing Orders Committee. His passion as Member of Parliament for Chembe was to transform the District into the Industrial Capital of Luapula Province, hence his initiative to establish the Multi-Facility Economic Zone (MFEZ) in Chembe to attract investment to the area under special fiscal incentives provided by the Government.

He is also passionate about Girl Child education, hence, he has established The '**Build Chembe Foundation**' (BCF), a registered NGO whose vision is to incorporate three (3) inter-related campaigns under the **GIRL CHILD EDUCATION SUPPORT PROGRAMME (GCESP)** namely, The Menstrual Hygiene Campaign, The Campaign against Teenage Pregnancies and the Campaign against Early Marriages. On 2nd October, 2019, he moved a Private Member's Motion which was unanimously adopted in Parliament urging Government to start the distribution of free sanitary pads to girls in rural and poor areas of the Country. He is also Chairman of Whisper a Dream Foundation (WADF), a Zambian registered NGO focusing on teaching young girls about menstrual hygiene and sanitation in vulnerable communities and school girls across the country. Both BCF and WADF work to mobilize both local and international support and contributions to the distribution of sanitary pads which has been a major hinderance for girls' progression in schools due to the high cost.