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For Immediate Release

ON THE COMMEMORATION OF NELSON MANDELA DAY -18TH JULY, 2018 “OVERCOMING POVERTY IS NOT A GESTURE OF CHARITY, ITS AN ACT OF JUSTICE”.

“Action Against Poverty” is the dedicated theme for this year’s Nelson Mandela’s Day, which is also the centenary celebration of the late South African first black president Mandela’s birthday. As CSPR our clarion call is the quote by Nelson Mandela which states that: "Overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is an act of justice"

On this Day, we are called upon to reflect on the life of Nelson Mandela as well as our own founding fathers and mothers of this great nation including the first Republican President Dr Kenneth Kaunda who sacrificed their lives for the freedom and justice of others, without selfish interests and rose above politics.

What sets apart politicians like Nelson Mandela from what we are seeing today was that he sympathized with the poor and felt the pain of every single South African whose rights and freedoms had been taken away and denied a life of dignity. He knew that the sum of every society is made of the individuals who live in it; that our human lives are woven in the fiber of our communities; thus, it is not possible to live a just life in an unjust society. Politicians should spend more time listening to the voices of its people especially the voiceless like the poor and vulnerable, more than their fellow politicians. Only then can they stand in solidarity with the poor and come up with sustainable solutions to empower and lift them out of poverty.

Poverty is real and It needs real action to fight it!

How can we live with ourselves as a nation if amidst all the economic growth and unshared prosperity, living conditions of millions of citizens especially in the rural areas are below the minimum standards of human dignity more so for women and children? Inequality levels are so high that it is almost as if there are people who are more entitled to the country’s resources than others. we carry on our daily lives and ignore the over 40.8% extremely poor population as if they are any less Zambian than ourselves!

Those privileged with the responsibility to uplift the poor people’s livelihoods, are more engaged in TALKSHOPS with the popular weapon of choice for fighting poverty being WORDS, and just WORDS! We Need Action to End Poverty in Zambia!

Nelson Mandela’s Day calls for political leaders, ruling and opposition and indeed all Zambians to take stock of how much they are contributing to promoting social justice and poverty reduction in their communities. We must all in one way or the other play our part towards the fight against poverty and injustice and build a greater Zambia.

CSPR therefore calls on government to accelerate efforts towards the eradication of poverty in all its forms through both policy and practice as pronounced in the 7th National Development Plan. In this regard, government must fully implement and enact all policies and laws which are meant to empower the poor through a strengthened voice in the design and implementation of pro-poor polices among them the planning and budgeting bill; embrace the spirit of solidarity with the poor when managing public resources to prevent all actions or inactions which disadvantage them such as corruption and abuse of public resources; and lastly put in place measures which will inculcate
values of selfless service and volunteerism, thus they should immediately give a roadmap on the process of developing the National Volunteers Policy which has stalled for over one year now.

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CSPR is a civil society anti-poverty advocacy network working for pro-poor development in Zambia whose vision is; "A Zambia where its citizens are empowered and have access to all basic needs"