

**'Poverty levels unacceptably high' - UNDP Zambia**



**“We call on all Zambians to join the rank poverty 1<sup>st</sup>”**

UNDP Economic Advisor, Abdouilie Jallow has called on the Zambian government and its people to rank poverty eradication first. Mr.Jallow said that the poverty levels in the nation is unacceptably high and the rank poverty first theme is in line with the 2004 MDG theme, 'Youth a new voice for MDG.' Gracing the Rank Poverty 1<sup>st</sup> march past held on the 30<sup>th</sup> of October in Lusaka, Mr. Jallow further said that the role of the United Nations system in Zambia is to eradicate poverty.

And speaking earlier, Civil Society for Poverty Reduction Coordinator, Besnati Mpepo said, ' the walk is a very short one compared to the long walks that many Zambians children and women have to walk in searching for a descent life.' Besnati called on all Zambians to rise and demand for their rights, 'it's time to receive our basic rights by prioritising poverty eradication on the national agenda.' Operation Young Vote Coordinator, Kelly Salati called on the Zambian youths to rise and seek innovative of eradicating poverty.” We have abundant resources as a nation and our first disadvantage is not the lack of resources but lack of knowledge in using them for our benefit said,' Salati.



**Youth involvement in poverty fight is very important**



The walk that brought a number of Non-governmental organisations, the church and ordinary Zambians was from the Lusaka main Post office to Kamwala area opposite the freedom statue. Among the many messages on poverty were, 'NO Excuse - Make Poverty History, 'A poverty fund must be established to RING FENCE or protect resources for poverty reduction.' And a poem from FAWEZA girl child group almost stirred the audience to tears when they said, 'poverty has left us with AIDS', 'poverty is a source of AIDS', 'what's happening to our country', 'a Christian nation, what's happening to our Christianity? - 'A Zambian child has cried out but the cry seems to have gone un noticed, we will never give up in this battle, till we conquer poverty.

Civil Society participation in budget making and implementation



And Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR) Director, Fr.Pete Henriot said ranking poverty first for Zambia is not only a dream but also a reality that many people want to experience. "Vote in the right way to eradicate poverty,' said Fr.Henriot. The prelate said that there are many people who are saying we cannot ignore poverty. He further commended the Church for providing the message of Hope and called on the Civil Society to join hands in making a difference in the poverty levels in the nation.

Rank Poverty 1<sup>st</sup> for Zambia, government leaders urged



Representing the Labour Movement, ZCTU member, Sylvester Tembo cautioned government, "we would like to remind government that they are elected to serve Zambia, poverty eradication is possible if we have a caring government." The Labour Leader further said that peace is meaningless if the majority of our people are poor, if they are jobless and if there is very little talk about street children.

The labour movement wants to government to act against poverty



**THE WALK SAID IN PICTURES ON PAGE 3**

**'WE WERE THERE, HOPE YOU JOIN NEXT TIME,' Derrick Sinjela.**



The organising group below



By Henry Malumo

