OPENING
I thank all AfSBT members for electing me president, and the AfSBT board for their confidence in me. I am member no. 1 of AfSBT and have been member of the Society since its inception. I have served as Vice President of the Society for the SADC Region, and also as President Elect of AfSBT. For my extra curricula activities, I am Vice President of the National Olympics Committee of Zambia, and am also President of the Zambia Volley Ball Association.

ACADEMIC BACKGROUND
I am a medical doctor and blood transfusion specialist trained at the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh. I also have an MBA from the University of Lincoln.

REFERENCE TO HISTORY
It is almost 20 years since AfSBT was formed. We have come a long way from the early days and a lot has been achieved. We have moved from a small group of enthusiastic participants who met in Uganda initially and went on to form the Society in Côte d’Ivoire in 1999. Despite the achievement, we are at a stage where we need to assert ourselves as a truly pan African society that is recognised and represents blood transfusion interests for all stakeholders – our blood donors, recipients of blood, relatives of patients, prescribers, suppliers of commodities to blood services, sponsors of the Society, etc.

DEVELOPMENTS
If we are to move forward, we need to address issues related to:
- Governance
- Transparency
- Accountability

Having said that, I would like to see AfSBT involved in the following:
- Increase member participation in the activities of the Society
- AfSBT profile elevated and recognised as truly representing the interests of the stakeholders on the continent
- Greater collaboration with related professional bodies and other stakeholders and greater involvement in research
- Improved financial status of AfSBT
- Expansion of the congress programme to include other related areas such as marketing and financing

FUTURE
- A strategic plan has been developed and is under discussion by the AfSBT Board.
- In summary, the strategic plan is aimed at setting out clear objectives, priorities and action plans and anticipated outcomes for the next four years.
- This strategy document is intended to be a live and inspiring operational and management tool for the growth and sustainability of the Society that will guide the execution, response, coordination, stakeholder engagement and monitoring and evaluation of planned activities.
CONCLUSION
I see exciting times ahead as this new plan challenges us at country and regional level to participate more in the activities of the Society.

THANK YOU ALL / MERCI

Address by Dr Gabriel Muyinda, Incoming President, AfSBT