

The mining industry has been at the heart of Zambia's economic development for over 100 years. The country is endowed with a large known resource base of copper, emeralds, uranium, tin, gold and other deposits. The country has potential for more discoveries as more areas are being targeted for detailed prospecting and exploration. In that regard, the mining sector in Zambia will continue to be a significant contributor to Government revenue and formal employment. Therefore, the country needs to convert fully its mineral wealth for the benefit of its people. To do this, the country needs to know where to improve so as derive maximum benefit from the mineral and ground water resources for the both current and future generation.

It is against this background that, the University of Zambia in collaboration with the Copperbelt University through their respective schools of mines, held the first ever National Conference on Geology, Mining Metallurgy and Ground Water Resources from 22nd to 24th November, 2018 under the theme: **'The Future of Mining in Zambia.'** The event was graced by the Minister of Mines and Mineral Development, Hon. Richard Musukwa and the Minister of Higher Education, Prof. Nkandu Luo.

The National conference brought together both local and international experts that included academics and researchers, industry and society and key policy makers from ten countries including USA, Turkey , Australia, Namibia, Dubai, South Africa, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Botswana and Germany. These countries gathered within the conference framework of the theme to share knowledge and experiences on ways and means of addressing the current and future challenges and prospects in geology, mining, metallurgy and mineral processing and groundwater resources and building local capacity for mineral resources education in Zambia.

The conference also provided an important platform for regional and international co-operation among the participants.

This special issue of the Journal of Natural and Applied Sciences (JONAS) is a culmination of the selected nine papers presented at the conference by some participants covering topics on mining and are reflective of the major issues in the mining sector to enhance productivity and wealth creation.

Victor Mutambo (PhD)

Guest Editor