



ADDRESS

BY

**THE PRESIDENT AND COMMANDER IN-CHIEF
OF THE ZIMBABWE DEFENCE FORCES
HIS EXCELLENCY
CDE. DR. E. D. MNANGAGWA,**

AT

**THE BURIAL OF NATIONAL HEROES,
CDE. ELISON MUPAMAONDE, CDE. COSMAS
CHIRINGA, AND MAJOR GENERAL (RTD)
DR. HEBERT CHINGONO.**

**NATIONAL HEROES' ACRE
23 MARCH 2026**

The Bereaved Mupamaonde, Chiringa and Chingono Families;

First Lady, Amai. A. Mnangagwa;

Vice President and Second Secretary of ZANU PF,
Hon. Gen. (Rtd) Dr. C. G. D. N. Chiwenga;

Vice President and Second Secretary of ZANU PF,
Hon. Col. (Rtd) Dr. K. C. D. Mohadi;

National Chairman of ZANU PF and Minister of Defence,
Hon. O. C. Z. Muchinguri-Kashiri;

Minister of State for Harare Metropolitan Province,
Hon. C. Tawengwa;

Honourable Ministers;

Speaker of Parliament, Hon. Adv. J. F. N. Mudenda;

President of the Senate, Amai M. M. Chinomona;

The Chief Justice, Hon. L. Malaba;

President of the National Chiefs' Council,
Hon. Sen. M. Khumalo;

Politburo and Central Committee Members;

Chief Secretary to the President and Cabinet,
Dr. M. Rushwaya;

Chairman of the Public Service Commission,
Dr. V. Hungwe;

Commander Zimbabwe Defence Forces
General E. Matatu;

Service Chiefs;

Your Excellencies Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

Mayor of the City of Harare, His Worship,
Councillor. J. Mafume;

Veterans of the Liberation Struggle;

Senior Government Officials;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Comrades and Friends.

On behalf of the nation, our ruling, revolutionary mass Party, ZANU PF, Government, my family, and indeed on my behalf, I wish to once again extend my heartfelt condolences to the Mupamaonde, Chiringa, and Chingono families.

This follows the demise of three gallant sons of the soil and veterans of our liberation struggle who served Zimbabwe, with distinction across different epochs of our nation.

Comrade Elison Mupamaonde, passed on, on the 3rd of March 2026 at St Albert's Mission Hospital at the age of 76, Comrade Cosmas Chiringa, a dedicated career public servant left us on 9 March 2026, at West End Hospital, at the age of 67 and Major General (Rtd) Dr. Hebert Chingono, a decorated commander, passed on in Mazowe, on 15 March 2026, at the age of 68.

We share the sorrow with the three bereaved families. These gallant National Heroes we are laying to rest at this National Heroes Shrine were mentors, and standard-bearers, whose legacies will inspire generations to come.

Their impact extends from the courageous footprints of our liberation war, professional echelons of our military and civil service. They served with unflinching patriotism consistency, persistence, humility and distinction; they led with honour, and selflessness, earning their place here, among the departed illustrious sons and daughters of Zimbabwe.

Fellow Mourners, Comrades and Friends;

Born on 18 July 1950, the late National Hero, Elison Mupamaonde's chimurenga names were Soft Magarasadza and Dubulani Mlotshwa. To his neighbours in Muzarabani and Centenary, he was a humble farmer and a family man, devoted husband and father.

Cde Magarasadza belonged to that early, legendary vanguard generation. In 1973, he crossed through Botswana on his way to Tanzania and underwent intensive commando training at Morogoro, alongside personalities such as the former Commander of the Zimbabwe Defence Forces, General Retired Philip Valerio Sibanda. Recognised for his technical astuteness, he was sent to the Soviet Union to master specialised artillery skills.

Upon his return in 1976, he was deployed to the front line and took part in critical missions including the raids on Kariba Airport and Makuti bases. In 1979, he was appointed Commander of the Northern Front Two, overseeing a vast liberated territory, turning parts of Mashonaland West into a 'no-go zone' for the oppressive colonial Smith regime.

We remember his tactical genius during the June 1977 attack on Kariba, where he personally led a Grad-P10

battery in a bombardment that paralysed Rhodesian positions, without a single loss of life among his men.

His command was also instrumental during the historic Viscount incidents of 1978 and 1979 near Wamira Hills and Magunje. These operations sent shockwaves through out the colonial administration.

In 1980, the late National Hero, Cde Mupamaonde did not seek high office or public acclaim. Having successfully brought together his forces, at the Romeo Assembly Point, he proceeded to live a private life. He was a pillar of strength for the Centenary community and Mashonaland Central Province, until his passing on at St Albert's Mission Hospital.

The greatest tribute we can pay to you Cde Mupamaonde is through unwavering loyalty to our ongoing developmental revolution. We must continue to honour the late National Hero, Cde Mupamaonde and other luminaries

of our motherland; by turning the land they fought for, into green belts; our mines and industries into productive, thriving units.

‘Nyika inovakwa, inotongwa, inonamatigwa nevene vayo/Ilizwe lakhiwa, libuswe, likhu-le-ke-lwe ngabanikazi balo’.

Fellow Mourners, Comrades and Friends;

Born on 10 December 1960 in Manicaland Province, the late Cde Cosmas Chiringa joined the liberation struggle in 1976. He arrived at Doroï Camp soon after the brutal, heinous and inhuman attack of Nyadzonya. He trained at Takawira Base 2 and was subsequently deployed to Nachingweya Camp in Tanzania.

After completing his training, he was appointed Political Commissar for Regiment 13, responsible for political education and ideological orientation. In 1979, he was deployed to Musikavanhu Sector in Mozambique.

Later on, he served at Dzapasi Assembly Point, in charge of publicizing our 1980 Election Manifesto. Afterwards, he was tasked with the opening up of our Party offices, in Mashonaland Central Province.

In March 1980, he was selected to attend a Senior Officers' Course in Romania, where he completed Battalion and Brigade Command Courses and obtained a Diploma in Military Strategy.

During his years in the trenches to liberate our motherland, our late National Hero learned the values of discipline, sacrifice, persistence and consistent loyalty. He is a stalwart of the revolution, surviving the hardships of the battle field and constant threat of the enemy. The unwavering patriotism, that saw him navigate the dangerous paths of the war, proved to be instrumental to his later years as a senior public servant.

Having joined the Ministry of Local Government in 1982, his service in our bureaucracy spanned 39 years. He was instrumental in coordinating processes that saw the successful implementation of the Fast Track Land Reform Programme. An active Party Cadre, the late Cde Chiringa, was elected Provincial Secretary for Administration in our Party, ZANU PF between 2006-2009.

A knowledgeable and ideologically grounded bureaucrat, his role as Provincial Administrator in both Manicaland and Mashonaland Central Provinces was impactful and transformational, to the communities he served.

Like many of his generation who joined the struggle at a young age, he remained committed to lifelong learning attaining a Political Science and Administration Degree from the University of Zimbabwe and a Master of Public Sector Management degree from Africa University.

He was a writer and commentator on the liberation struggle and rural development, with several articles published across various platforms. His perspectives continue to inspire many through his lived experiences and grounded reflections.

On the political front, the late National Hero, Cde Chiringa was among the founders of the Zimbabwe Liberation War Veterans Association. He became the First District Chairman for Makoni and later on Provincial Vice Chairman for Manicaland Province in 1995 and substantive Provincial Chairman in 1997.

Comrades and Friends;

The late National Hero, Cde Chiringa was one of the bridge-builders who turned the vision of ‘Leaving No One and No Place Behind’ into a practical administrative reality.

The many departed sons and daughters of the soil who fought for our independence and freedom were drawn from the breadth and length of our country. To honour them, let us continue to ensure the success of our ongoing Devolution and Decentralisation Agenda.

Undoubtedly the milestones we have scored to-date, are a testament that devolution is a living, reality in every village, ward, and district. Under my Administration, we are achieving our development objectives. We have dismantled the old ‘Bamba Zonke’ mentality.

To the men and women who currently occupy various positions across stations of our Public Service, I urge you to take a leaf from the life of our National Hero, Cde Cosmas Chiringa.

Under my leadership, a title is not a trophy; it is a mandate to serve wholeheartedly, with humility and fairness. Discipline, loyalty, patriotism and collective leadership is the bedrock of our developmental state. The late Cde Chiringa, will be remembered as a man who upheld the systems of Government, participatory development, professionalism, order and punctuality.

To achieve Vision 2030, our civil service must be an administrative engine of precision, anchored by the unrelenting work ethic that our National Hero, Cde Chiringa displayed with exemplary conduct. He never allowed the walls of the offices to disconnect him from the residents of our suburbs and rural wards.

The tendency of ‘unapproachable and inaccessible public officials’ is unacceptable. We all have a duty to protect the public purse, ensure value for money and reject corruption. We must serve in the national interests.

My Dear Fellow Mourners, Comrades and Friends;

I now turn to the life of a typical soldier, commander and academic, Major General (Retired) Dr. Hebert Chingono. Born on 29 January 1958 in Rukweza Village, in Manicaland, our departed National Hero set a high standard of service, through his sacrificial service, to our beloved motherland, Zimbabwe.

His leadership was forged in the classrooms of Nyazura Adventist Mission, where in 1976, he arranged a strike which caught the attention of Freedom Fighters for recruitment. This act of defiance and resistance led to his arrest and detention in Rusape, by colonial oppressive administration, yet he remained undeterred. Immediately after his Ordinary Level Examinations, he crossed into Mozambique, to join the liberation struggle.

The late Cde Herbert Chingono, whose Chimurenga name was “Swift Chakanyuka” became a battle-hardened cadre in the Chitepo Sector. His bravery was tested in the fierce Battle of Mavhonde in 1979, one of the most decisive and final large-scale confrontation of the war. It was this gallantry feat that led to his selection for specialised artillery training in Romania, where he excelled and was retained as an instructor.

At Independence, he brought that expertise home, and became the founding Battery Commander in the Field Artillery Regiment. He was a trusted commander under the overall leadership of the late National Hero, Air Chief Marshal Perence Shiri, leading the 2 Field Artillery Regiment and later the amalgamated units with distinction. He later authored the first-ever Formation Field Training Exercise, **‘EYE OPENER 1’**. The late General Officer rose within the ranks of the Zimbabwe Defence Forces, from a Lieutenant in 1983 to Major General in 2023.

In his final years of service, Major General Chingono transitioned seamlessly into the Second Republic's mission for national food security and sovereignty, serving as Chief Director in the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development.

Fellow Mourners, Comrades and Friends;

The medals accorded to Major General (Rtd) Dr. Hebert Chingono depict chapters of a life lived in total loyalty and patriotism to our beloved motherland, Zimbabwe.

Our National Hero and Grand Officer of the Zimbabwe Order of Merit served with distinction as the Commandant of the Zimbabwe Staff College and the Dean of Social Sciences at the Zimbabwe National Defence University.

His Liberation and Independence Medals recognise a cadre who bravely chose the front and became an artillery specialist in independent Zimbabwe.

He was equally awarded, the Long and Exemplary Service Medals in recognition of his four decades as a professional soldier within the Zimbabwe Defence Forces. Our late national hero was also awarded the Mozambique and DRC Campaign Medals, as a testament of his pan-African spirit. His life was lived with purpose, honour, bravery, and an unwavering love for Zimbabwe.

I call upon our officers, men, and women of our Zimbabwe Defence Forces, as well as the security sector as a whole to honour our departed heroes who served in the military and understand your role in the context of our developing, modernising, and industrialising state.

In an era of hybrid threats and rapid technological changes, you must continue to sharpen your capabilities. Align your professional training with our national aspirations.

I call upon the nation to take the occasion of this interment of our three departed heroes, to renew our individual and

collective sense of national purpose. Let us honour the late Comrades, Mupamaonde, Major Gen (Rtd) Chingono and Cosmas Chiringa by ensuring that our peace is the bedrock upon which we build sustainable development, modernisation and prosperity.

When situations needed brave, reliable and dependable men, who could shield others from enemy attack, these three departed heroes, always availed themselves. Inspired by their works, may us, who remain, have a culture of choosing that which is good against that which is evil. Let us always shield our people, national policies and leadership from detractors and malcontents.

This critical stage of our revolution, calls for cadres and citizens who are unflinchingly patriotic and trustworthy.

Zvomene, zvomene, patiri seNyika, tinoda vanhu vakavimbika, nguva dzose, siku ne sikati.

Fellow Mourners;

I address you at a time of an ongoing conflict in the Middle East. The impact of that war has shaken the entire globe, including here in our beloved motherland, Zimbabwe. While, my Government has put in place measures to shield us from unforeseen and potential shocks, we must remain vigilant and focused.

‘Nyika inovakwa, inotongwa, inonamatigwa nevene vayo/Ilizwe lakhiwa, libuswe, *likhu-le-ke-lwe* ngabanikazi balo’.

Meanwhile, we will continue to structurally transform our economy, ensuring that our finite resources are processed and value-added at source, for the benefit of our people. Our partners and investors across all sectors particularly in mining, have a duty to ensure, durable and mutually beneficial collaboration. The doors of my Administration remain open for complementary economic relations.

Finally, to the Mupamaonde, Chingono, and Chiringa families, our country will forever remain grateful to you for sharing the lives of these three illustrious sons of Zimbabwe, with us. May you continue to be comforted by the Almighty God.

To our departed Comrades: I say to you, Go well, our gallant fighters. Go well, our tireless civil servants. Go well, defenders of our Sovereignty. You have fought a good fight. You have finished your course. You have kept the faith.

May your souls rest in eternal peace, and may your legacies continue to inspire generations to come.

Long live our Heroes.

Long live our Unity, Peace, and Development.

God bless you all.

God bless Zimbabwe.

I thank you.