



**SPEECH**

**BY**

**THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC  
OF ZIMBABWE,  
HIS EXCELLENCY, DR. E. D. MNANGAGWA**

**AT**

**THE STATE BANQUET HOSTED IN HONOUR OF  
THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
BOTSWANA, HIS EXCELLENCY ADVOCATE  
DUMA GIDEON BOKO**

**HARARE**

**21 APRIL 2026**

Your Excellency and Dear Brother, Advocate Duma  
Gideon Boko, President of the Republic of Botswana;

First Lady, Dr. A. Mnangagwa,

Vice President Gen. (Rtd) Dr. C. G. D. N. Chiwenga;

Vice President Hon. Col. (Rtd) Dr. K. C. D. Mohadi;

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

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

Chief Justice, Hon. L. Malaba

Honourable Ministers;

The Delegation from Botswana;

Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

Senior Government Officials;

Business Leaders;

Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

On behalf of the Government and people of the Republic of Zimbabwe, and indeed on my own behalf, I extend a warm welcome to you, your Excellency, my Dear Brother, and your esteemed delegation, to Zimbabwe. Please feel at home.

I thank you for graciously accepting to pay this State Visit and for accepting to be the Guest of Honour at the 66<sup>th</sup> Edition of the Zimbabwe International Trade Fair, which is being under the theme “**Connected Economies, Competitive Industries.**”

Your presence at this premier trade showcase reflects shared prioritisation of industrialisation and modernisation of our respective jurisdictions, anchored on the rich natural endowments and our own people. It is equally reflective of the commitment we have towards deepening bilateral relations, broadening economic cooperation and also advancing regional integration.

## **Your Excellency;**

Today we convene, not just as neighbours, but as family; bound by a shared past and common purpose towards a prosperous future for our respective countries and region. Undoubtedly, my Dear Brother, we have the privilege and immense responsibility to carry forward the strong and excellent relations between our two nations. These, are cemented on the basis of blood relations, the history between our two peoples, and unbreakable bonds of the liberation struggle.

Zimbabwe is forever indebted to Botswana for the principled and courageous solidarity as well as material support towards the cause of our independence. Botswana extended shelter, sustenance and safe passage to Zimbabwe's freedom fighters. Many cadres and communities bear testimony to the generosity and compassion of the people of Botswana.

We remember and salute the members of the Botswana Defence Forces who were killed during the Lesoma Ambush on 27 February 1978 by the racist and oppressive Rhodesian regime. That incident, among many others throughout SADC, remind us that the democracy, independence, peace and security we are enjoying was paid for by the supreme sacrifice of the peoples of this region.

In recognition of Botswana's role in our liberation struggle, we invite your country to participate in the Museum of African Liberation Project, here in Harare. To this end, I am pleased to announce a donation of land on the premise, to showcase your historic contribution, to the liberation of the Continent.

As the citizens of Southern Africa, therefore, we all have a duty to jealously guard regional unity, solidarity and the respective sovereignty of our nations. Never again shall our sacred lands be subject to foreign control and domination, under whatever guise.

## **Your Excellency;**

I am pleased that this State Visit will see us convene the 5<sup>th</sup> Session of the Bi-National Commission a testament of our ever-evolving strategic cooperation for development, prosperity and regional transformation.

Since the elevation of our cooperation framework to a Bi-National Commission, tangible, practical and transformational results are evident across a broad spectrum of sectors. Notable milestones have been reached in the fields of vaccines and livestock health. This cooperation in the agriculture sector, continues to build resilience, strengthen food security and empower youth and women for sustainable livelihoods.

On our part, we stand ready to scale up partnerships with regards the provision of essential medicines and medical consumables. This reciprocal cooperation reflects the true spirit of Ubuntu, and is what it ought to be between good neighbours and true brothers.

## **Your Excellency;**

Together, Zimbabwe and Botswana are custodians of some of the world's most remarkable ecosystems, from the Okavango Delta and the Hwange National Park, to the majestic Mosi-oa-Tunya, the Victoria Falls and the Chobe National Park.

Within this vast and interconnected landscape, our shared wildlife heritage moves freely, unrestricted by the boundaries imposed by colonial history.

Ongoing efforts to jointly develop the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area for shared prosperity, must see us unlock the immense potential of tourism within our two countries. Our unique natural endowments must lift many more people out of poverty into a higher quality of life.

Trade and investment relations are registering steady and encouraging progress. We must leverage our respective strengths and opportunities to position our economies as

competitive and integrated hubs within the region, under the African Continental Free Trade Area and SADC.

The reciprocal participation on our flagship trade exhibitions, including Zimbabwe's presence at Global Expo Botswana and Botswana's strong presence and participation at the Zimbabwe International Trade Fair (ZITF), has provided a practical platform for showcasing products, fostering partnerships and unlocking new market opportunities.

These efforts have resulted in the conclusion of trade deals and expansion of export opportunities across sectors such as manufacturing, agriculture and services. I am aware that a notable contingent of businesses from Botswana are exhibiting at this year's Trade Fair. We thank you for this support.

**Your Excellency and Dear Brother;**

**“Zimbabwe is Open for Business”** and I look forward to discussions tomorrow at our Bi-National Commission,

which will extensively cover aspects impacting on the trade, investment, industrialisation, infrastructure development, energy cooperation, border facilitation, and value chain integration, among others.

Beyond economic cooperation, it is critically important that we strengthen social and cultural ties between our peoples, who must remain at the centre of this partnership. The need to facilitate the free movement between our nations cannot be over-emphasised.

**Your Excellency;**

As you are aware, Zimbabwe continues to endure the deleterious effects of the heinous and unjust illegal sanctions. We have as a people made a bold and deliberate choice to build our country, ourselves leveraging on our own resources and capabilities. We are emboldened by our national development philosophy, **Nyika inovakwa, inotongwa, inonamatirwa nevene vayo/Ilizwe lakhiwa, libuswe, li-khu-le-ke-lwe ngabanikazi balo.** In Setswana you

would say, “**Le-ha-tse, ... le-ba-hi-wa, ... la-bu-swa, ... la-ra-pe-le-lwa, ... ke benyi, ...ba-lo-na.**”

**Alleluya.**

**Your Excellency, Distinguished Guests;**

We meet at a time when the global landscape is increasingly becoming uncertain and unpredictable.

It is plagued by climate change, geo-political tensions, economic instability, and evolving security threats. These developments remind us that no nation can stand alone.

Zimbabwe remains a steadfast advocate for peace, justice and multi-lateralism, in defence of the United Nations Charter. We continue to be dedicated to working closely with Botswana at the bilateral level as well as regional, continental and international fora, to promote peace, stability and a just global order founded on sovereign equality of nations.

May I take the opportunity of this occasion to thank you, Your Excellency and Dear Brother for Botswana's dependable support for Zimbabwe's candidature for a non-permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council for the period 2027 to 2028.

I wish to sincerely thank the Government and people of Botswana for their unwavering solidarity and consistently calling for the removal of the unjust illegal sanctions imposed on our country by some Western powers.

My Dear Brother allow me to hold the formalities and further speechifying in abeyance until tomorrow. Tonight is about consummating the enduring fraternal relations, friendship, solidarity and cooperation between our two nations, in the true African fashion; over shared food, drink and music. As we do so, however, we re-commit to strengthening solidarity and to building a future defined by peace, stability, development and shared prosperity.

May I now invite, you, your Excellency along with our Distinguished Guests to rise and join me as I propose a toast:

- To the good health of my Dear Brother, His Excellency, President Duma Gideon Boko and the First Lady of Botswana;
- To the deepening and expansion of co-operation between the two sisterly Republics of Zimbabwe and Botswana;
- To peace, development and shared prosperity of Zimbabwe and Botswana;
- Long live the solidarity and friendship between Zimbabwe and Botswana.

**Cheers. Pula.**

**God bless you all.**

**God bless Zimbabwe and Botswana.**

**I thank you.**

**Tinotenda.**

***Ke -le -bo-ha.* (Kealeboga.)**