

ZIMBABWE CABINET
SIXTEENTH POST-CABINET PRESS BRIEFING
26th MAY, 2026

Today, the 26th of May 2026, His Excellency the President, Dr. E.D. Mnangagwa chaired the Sixteenth Cabinet Meeting and the following issues, among others, were considered and approved:

**1.0 UPDATE ON THE 2025/2026 SUMMER CROPS MARKETING
AND 2026 WINTER PRODUCTION PLAN AND IRRIGATION
INSIGHTS FROM 2017- 2025**

Cabinet noted and approved an update on the 2025/2026 Summer Crops Marketing; and 2026 Winter Production Plan, Mechanisation and Irrigation Insights from 2017-2025 which was presented by the Minister of Agriculture, Mechanisation and Water Resources Development, Honourable Dr. Anxious Jongwe Masuka.

Cabinet advises that the Second Round of Crops, Livestock and Fisheries Assessment Report reveals that the food security outlook for the country is generally positive. The projections indicate that Zimbabwe stands to realise a surplus strategic grain reserve ranging between 550 945 metric tonnes and 964 945 metric tonnes. The results serve to confirm that Zimbabwe has made notable strides in national food security, transitioning from deficit to surplus in staple crops like maize and wheat. According to the Global Report on Food Crisis 2026, released on 24 April 2026, Zimbabwe is now ranked 90 out of 136 assessed countries on the

Global Hunger Index of 2025. Zimbabwe was removed from the hunger hot spot countries in 2024. The achievement comes against the backdrop of strategic interventions such as climate-smart agricultural programmes, in particular, *Pfumvudza/Intwasa* and accelerated mechanization and irrigation development.

Currently, Government stocks held at the Grain Marketing Board as at 20 May 2026 stand at 152 467 metric tonnes. Regarding summer crop marketing, a total of 82 559 metric tonnes of crops comprising maize, soyabean, sorghum and sunflower have been formally marketed as at 1 April 2026, compared to 57 755 marketed at the same time in 2025. Since April 2026, GMB got an intake of 5 878.097 metric tonnes of which Midlands Province accounts for 71%. The Grain Marketing Board has settled 100% of its previously outstanding obligations in USD and 82.73% of ZiG payments as at 20th May, 2026. It is noteworthy that GMB holds 68 979.600 metric tonnes of third-party grain stocks since the completion of Artificial Intelligence-powered silos and subsequent offer of commercial storage services directly through the Warehouse Receipt system. GMB has 8.16% of the intake compared to 4.31% at the same time in 2025. Concerning marketing arrangements, GMB will aggregate grain from farmers comprising Strategic Grain Reserve and private players through its 1 804 collection points and 89 depots. Furthermore, GMB will introduce an **"In-Transit Grain Storage Facility"** to enhance grain imports and supply chains.

The actual progress regarding the harvesting of various crops is as follows:

- i. A total of 2 341 857 mt of maize was harvested across all provinces with Mashonaland West topping followed by Mashonaland Central Province;
- ii. A total of 261 868 mt of sorghum was harvested across the 8 provinces with Matabeleland South topping the list with 44 310 MT; and
- iii. A total of 94 103 mt of soyabean was harvested with Mashonaland Central recording the highest figure of 44 686 mt.

As at day 52, a total of 255, 92 million kilogrammes of tobacco had been sold at an average price of US\$2.54 per kilogramme. This represents a 24% increase in volume and a 25% decline in average price compared to the same period in 2025 when 207.17 million kg were sold at an average price of USD3.38/kg.

Tobacco now accounts for approximately 10%-15% of Zimbabwe's agricultural GDP, making it one of the most highly concentrated tobacco-dependent economies globally. By comparison, this percentage is significantly larger than in other top global producers like Brazil. Between 2025 and 2026, the total volume of tobacco exports increased by 62.3% with the value also increasing by 67.5%. China remains the primary destination for Zimbabwe's tobacco, accounting for roughly 60% of the total export volume.

The cotton marketing season commenced with 173 permanent and 398 mobile common buying points created countrywide. The following prices were negotiated between farmers and contractors: Grade A, US\$0.43/kg;

Grade B, US\$0.41/kg; Grade C, US\$0.38/kg and Grade D, US\$0.35/kg. Payment is pegged at 70% in USD and 30% in ZiG.

Regarding the Winter Cereals Production Plan, crop estimates are as follows:

- i. wheat, 662 500 MT over a planted area of 125 000 hectares;
- ii. barley, 50 000 MT over 6 500 hectares; and
- iii. potatoes, 243 850 mt over a planted area of 9 000 hectares.

The total area earmarked for winter crops is 140 500 hectares targeting production of 956 350 MT across all provinces. A total of 243 850 mt for Irish potato is expected from 9 000 hectares. To date, 86 800 mt has been produced from 3 100 hectares. Regarding progress on wheat planting, Cabinet noted that 54% of the targeted area has been planted compared to 35% at the same time last year. Growers are being urged to expedite planting during the favourable planting window.

Cabinet also noted insights from irrigation and mechanization updates which reveal that Zimbabwe is now ranked fourth in terms of mechanization development in Africa. The result is an affirmation of the increased tractor fleet from 4 466 units in 2015 to 17 220 units in 2026, a 386% increase; and combine harvesters increasing from 158 to 403, reflecting a 155% increase. Irrigation development is now a cornerstone of Zimbabwe's agricultural transformation as functional irrigated land increased from 171 000 hectares in 2017 to 258 773 hectares in 2025. The Presidential Vision Accelerator Model increased irrigation scheme production from 400 mt in 2019 to 89 035 mt in 2025.

1.0 **OUTCOME OF THE PAN-AFRICAN MINERAL DEVELOPMENT COMPANY COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING HELD ON 11 APRIL 2026 IN VICTORIA FALLS, ZIMBABWE**

Cabinet considered and noted the outcomes of the Council of Ministers Meeting between the Minister of Transport and Infrastructural Development of the Republic of Zimbabwe and the Minister of Transport and Logistics of the Republic of Zambia held in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe on 11 April 2026.

The Council of Ministers Meeting recommended that there be Presidential Level engagements for South Africa to appoint its quota of the Pan-African Mining Development Company Board Members, restore mineral rights to their original status and waive the Pan-African Mining Development Company statutory debts.

Cabinet further noted the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Republic of Zimbabwe and the Republic of Zambia on Co-operation in the area of Feasibility Studies and Development of the Kafue (Zambia) via Chirundu and Lion's Den (Zimbabwe) Railway Link to Machipanda and other Emerging Railway projects in Transport Corridors shared between Zambia and Zimbabwe. The railway, route estimated to cost US\$2.18 billion will enhance railway competitiveness, lower transport and logistics costs and reduce transit distances to the port of Beira, South African ports and the port of Dar es Salaam. The two Ministers agreed that the involvement of Mozambique in the project was critical for delivering the project as a comprehensive package.

1.0 ESTABLISHMENT OF THE INTEGRATED PROVINCIAL SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES

Cabinet noted and approved the framework for the establishment of the Integrated Provincial Special Economic Zones (IP-SEZ), as presented by the Minister of Finance, Economic Development and Investment Promotion.

Government seeks to strengthen the existing framework for Special Economic Zones under the Zimbabwe Investments and Development Agency (ZIDA) Act [Chapter 14: 34] through the creation of a framework for provincial integration and decentralized industrial development in line with the philosophy of **“leaving no-one and no place behind”**. The envisaged benefits include, *inter-lia*, accelerated industrialization and value-addition; promoting balanced regional development; enhanced investment attraction; employment creation and skills development; and enhancing Zimbabwe’s competitiveness in regional and global markets.

The Integrated Provincial Special Economic Zones (SEZ) Framework will establish a network of specialized SEZs distributed across all provinces, starting with Village Business Units and aligned to comparative advantages and structured as complete industrial ecosystems comprising upstream production; midstream processing; downstream manufacturing; logistics; infrastructure; and services. The model will

ensure that SEZs will not operate as isolated industrial parks but as complete production and investment clusters.

The IPSEZ has 6 strategic pillars as follows: Provincial Comparative Advantage; Beneficiation and Resource-based Industrialisation; Integrated Industrial Value Chains; Export Oriented Production; Public-Private Partnership Development; Import Substitution and Domestic Industrial Deepening.

The Provincial SEZ will be configured as follows:

- i. **Harare Metropolitan:** Financial services, ICT, pharmaceuticals; light manufacturing, and Business Process Outsourcing (BPOs).
- ii. **Bulawayo Metropolitan:** Agro-processing, tourism, renewable energy, and diamond processing
- iii. **Manicaland:** Agro-processing, tourism, renewable energy, and diamond processing.
- iv. **Mashonaland Central:** Mining beneficiation and Agro-processing.
- v. **Mashonaland East:** Lithium processing, and agro-industrial development.
- vi. **Mashonaland West:** Agro-processing, fisheries and aquaculture.
- vii. **Midlands:** Steel, iron beneficiation, and logistics hub.
- viii. **Masvingo:** Agro-processing, lithium and iron beneficiation.
- ix. **Matabeleland North:** Energy, tourism and timber processing.
- x. **Matabeleland South:** Logistics; beef and leather; and solar energy.

Cross-cutting strategic Provincial Industrial Development includes mineral beneficiation SEZs, agro-processing, logistics, tourism and energy-linked SEZs. The successful implementation of the IPSEZ model depends on sound governance and institutional framework comprising the National Licensing Authority and decentralised Provincial Licensing Committees.

4.0 ZIMBABWE'S EBOLA PREPAREDNESS

Cabinet considered and noted the Report on Zimbabwe's Ebola Preparedness, as presented by the Minister of Health and Child Care, Honourable Douglas Mombeshora.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has since 17 May 2026 declared the current Ebola Virus Disease Outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) with Extension into Uganda, a Public Health Emergency of International Concern.

As of 22 May 2026, the Ebola outbreak has recorded 750 cases in the Democratic Republic of Congo and 2 confirmed imported cases in Uganda, becoming active cross-border transmission and sustained regional risk. Uganda's cases have since increased to five. Zimbabwe's risk is primarily driven by population mobility across regional borders, necessitating strengthened early detection, rapid containment capacity and revamped border health security measures.

The nation is assured that, Zimbabwe has an Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response (IDSR) system in place, supported by weekly epidemiological reporting and trained surveillance personnel. While Zimbabwe has established preparedness systems under the Public Health Emergency Operations Centre and the Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response framework, the evolving regional Ebola Virus Disease situation presents an opportunity to further strengthen surveillance, real-time alert systems and co-ordination mechanisms to support rapid detection and containment of outbreaks.

Cabinet approved the establishment of a provisional Ebola Virus Disease Preparedness Contingency Fund based on a rapid costed needs assessment covering surveillance, point of entry, preparedness, laboratory strengthening, mobilisation of infection prevention, control commodities and rapid response deployment.

5.0 REPORT ON VICE PRESIDENT CHIWENGA'S VISIT TO UGANDA FOR PRESIDENT MUSEVENI'S INAUGURATION

Cabinet considered and noted the Report on the Visit to the Republic of Uganda for the Inauguration Ceremony of His Excellency President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni held at Kololo Ceremonial Grounds, Kampala on 12 May 2026 as presented by Honourable Vice President Gen. (Rtd.) Dr. C.G.D.N. Chiwenga.

The Vice President extended warm congratulations to President Yoweri Museveni on his re-election and inauguration as President of the United

Republic of Uganda. The ceremony was held under the theme **“Protecting the Gains Making a Qualitative Leap into Higher Middle-Income Status”**.

Zimbabwe’s Deputy Ambassador to Kenya highlighted that Zimbabwe and Uganda enjoy cordial relations rooted in shared liberation history and cooperation on regional and continental issues.

In his inauguration address, President Museveni called on African Governments to actively pursue industrialisation and local value addition and beneficiation of natural endowments in order to obtain greater value from exports and create wealth for Africans. President Museveni further called for enhanced political and economic integration on the African Continent through the formation of regional trading bodies and Federations to enhance economic and political cooperation.

6.0 REPORT ON HONOURABLE VICE PRESIDENT CHIWENGA’S VISIT TO THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Cabinet noted and approved a Report on the Vice President’ Visit to the Russian Federation which was presented by Honourable Vice President Chiwenga

Honourable Vice President Chiwenga led a delegation to the 11th Digitalisation of Industrial Russia Conference held from 18 to 21 May, 2026 in Nizhny Novgorod at the invitation of the Russian Federation. The purpose of the Conference was to map global digital industry roles,

accelerate Artificial Intelligence and industrial automation, strengthen technological sovereignty and expand Global South-Russia partnerships in digital infrastructure and human capital development.

The Conference provided the Vice President with an opportunity to articulate Zimbabwe's transformation agenda anchored on industrialization and beneficiation in mining, agriculture, manufacturing and tourism and highlighted the National Artificial Intelligence Strategy (2026-2030). The Vice President held bilateral engagements with the Governor of the Nizhny Novgorod Region; Russian Business Community and Zimbabwean students based in the Nizhny Novgorod region and conducted a tour of the Kulibin Special Economic Zone and Axis Plant.

The outcomes of the Visit included among others, upgrading of local Special Economic Zones based on the Russian experience; collaborative skills transfer with Russian counterparts in ICT, nuclear science, engineering and industrial technology; mining beneficiation; agro-processing; renewable energy and advanced manufacturing. Furthermore, engagements with the Zimbabwean mission revealed the need for deployment of additional trade and education attaches to Russia.

7.0 REPORT ON THE 13TH SESSION OF THE WORLD URBAN FORUM: AZERBAIJAN

Cabinet considered and noted the Report on 13th Session of the World Urban Forum held in Azerbaijan from 17 to 22 May, 2026.

The Republic of Azerbaijan and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), jointly convened the WUF running under the theme **“Housing the World: Safe and Resilient Cities and Communities”**. The visit advanced Zimbabwe’s economic diplomacy agenda, strengthened South-South cooperation and positioned the country to leverage emerging partnerships in urban transformation, digital governance, industrialisation, skills development and strategic infrastructure modernisation. The event also provided Zimbabwe with an opportunity to benchmark on Azerbaijan’s post-conflict reconstruction model, integrated digital public service delivery systems, high-density urban infrastructure planning and investment-led industrial modernisation. The lessons are directly relevant to Zimbabwe’s urban renewal strategy, service delivery reform agenda and industrial transformation framework.

The Ministerial Meeting on the New Urban Agenda focused on housing as a driver of social inclusion, economic opportunity and climate resilience, while emphasizing the need for stronger investment, multi-level governance and implementation.

Delivering Zimbabwe’s Statement during the Leaders’ Summit, Hon. Vice President Chiwenga underscored the global priority being placed on sustainable urban development. He stressed that the Government of Zimbabwe considers housing to be a fundamental right for all, re-affirming the country’s commitment to sustainable urban development. Deliberations re-affirmed that sustainable housing delivery requires

whole-of-Government coordination, blended financing mechanisms, public-private partnerships and climate-resilient infrastructure systems.

Azerbaijan expressed readiness to cooperate with Zimbabwe in mining technology, agriculture, energy, digital governance, education, defence and industrial innovation, while extending scholarship opportunities for Zimbabwean students in strategic disciplines.

8.0 REPORT ON THE CAMBRIDGE AFRICA EDUCATION FORUM AND CAMBRIDGE AFRICA DAY AND THE EDUCATION WORLD FORUM: 13 MAY TO 22 MAY, 2026, UNITED KINGDOM

Cabinet noted and approved a Report on the Cambridge Africa Education Forum and Cambridge Africa Day and the Education World Forum which was presented by the Minister of Primary and Secondary Education Honourable Torerai Moyo.

The Minister attended two main sessions namely, the Ministerial Dialogue on Cambridge Education held under the theme “**Partnering for Progress: Delivering the African Union Decade of Education**” and the World Education Forum held under the theme “**Education for a Shared Future: Peace, Planet, Purpose and Pathways**”.

The Ministerial Dialogue on Cambridge Education which was held from 14 to 15 May 2026 focused on strengthening partnerships in support of the provisions as outlined in the African Union Decade of Education, and

explored approaches to improving learning outcomes and building sustainable education systems across Africa.

The outcomes of the Ministerial Dialogue on Cambridge Engagement included the following: enhanced international cooperation among African Ministers of Education; increased momentum for technology-driven Education; greater international appreciation of Zimbabwe's education reforms; and renewed emphasis on skills-oriented learning.

The Education World Forum 2026 held in London from 18-22 May 2026 focused on ending violence in schools and promoting safe learning environments; strengthening foundational learning; promoting education for global citizenship; rethinking assessment systems for future skills in the Artificial Intelligence era; advancing technical and vocational education and training and scaling educational technology to improve equity; and enhancing research and teacher development in response to rapid technological change and the growing demand for future-ready skills.

Significantly, the Education Forum brought to the fore, key imperatives for reform in foundational learning and Early Childhood Development; expansion of technical and vocational education and training and industry partnerships; and the need for accelerated assessment reforms for future skills development.

9.0 REPORT ON ZIMBABWE'S PARTICIPATION AT THE 79TH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY: 18 TO 23 MAY, 2026: GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

Cabinet considered and noted the Report of the 79th World Health Assembly as presented by the Minister of Health and Child Care, Honourable Douglas Mombeshora.

The 79th World Health Assembly was convened under the theme "**Reshaping Global Health: A shared Responsibility**". The Assembly took place following the withdrawal of the United States of America from the World Health Organisation and its non-participation at the World Health Assembly 79th Session. Member States therefore underscored the importance of reducing reliance on external financing through increased national budget allocations, ring-fenced health related taxes and levies and establishment of sustainable mechanisms such as National Health Insurance or a National Health Care Programme.

Zimbabwe's participation at World Health Assembly 79th Session was successful and strategically significant in advancing national priorities, strengthening partnerships and contributing to global health governance reforms. The Assembly reinforced the centrality of resilient health systems anchored on sustainable domestic financing, reduced dependency on external assistance, and strengthened national ownership of health priorities.

I THANK YOU!