



SPEECH

BY

**THE PRESIDENT AND COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF THE
ZIMBABWE DEFENCE FORCES, HIS EXCELLENCY**

CDE.DR.E.D.MNANGAGWA

AT THE

**GRADUATION CEREMONY OF THE JOINT COMMAND
AND STAFF COURSE NUMBER 34**

25 NOVEMBER 2021

Director General, President's Department, Amb. I. Moyo;

Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps:

Defence Attaches here present;

Commandant Zimbabwe Staff College, Brig. Gen. J. Muzvidziwa;

Senior Officers, from the Zimbabwe Defence Forces;

Distinguished Guests;

Graduands of Joint Command and Staff Course Number 34;

Families of Graduands;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Comrades and Friends.

I am pleased once again to preside over this Joint Command and Staff Course Number 34 graduation ceremony here at the Zimbabwe Staff College. The event showcase the ability of the Zimbabwe Staff College to successfully and professionally discharge its mandate of providing quality education, human resources capacity building and training programmes for the Zimbabwe Defence Forces and other allied forces.

The Joint Command and Staff Course Number 34, is one of the highest intake in the history of this strategic national institution with a total of 138 students. As per tradition, the students were drawn from the Zimbabwe National Army, the Air Force of Zimbabwe, the Zimbabwe Republic Police, the Zimbabwe Prison and Correctional Service as well as the President's Department. It is however

unfortunate that this time round, due to the COVID-19 pandemic travel restrictions, the College could not enrol Allied students.

The global pandemic has brought about devastating effects on lives and livelihoods both locally and globally. The measures instituted to contain the pandemic have altered the way we interact and conduct business. Notwithstanding this, our Defence Forces have remained resolute in executing their mandate of defending the country's independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and also carrying out planned training programmes.

I applaud you for the critical and progressive thinking as well as the adoption of a wide array of initiatives that have seen all training institutions of the Defence Forces running their programmes as scheduled. Through continuous trainings among other important variables, the nation is guaranteed of a defence capability that is always ready to deal with any security threats.

Meanwhile, the intricate and growing complexities of International conflict and peace operations have increased the need to re-examine the curriculum of our training programmes. The addition of the National Security Studies on the Joint Command and Staff Course curriculum remains fluid with regards the changing trends and patterns in the peace and security field. I, therefore, exhort the Commandant and his teaching staff to further infuse salient dynamics of the emerging geo-political developments and realities into the curriculum. This should ultimately result in a critical mass of officers of the security establishment who are versatile, intellectually agile and adequately groomed to tackle present and future threats. The nurturing of a global security cadre who thinks globally and acts

locally, through learning from experiences of other jurisdictions, must continue to be entrenched within the rank and file of the Zimbabwe Defence Forces.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

The partnerships between the Zimbabwe Staff College and other institutions of higher learning in the country must entail the acquisition of a broad array of skills, competencies and capabilities albeit adapted to the military and security sphere. I extend my hearty congratulations to members of the Joint Command and Staff Course Number 34 who recently graduated with diplomas in Security Studies under the University of Zimbabwe. Makorokoto, Amhlope, Congratulations.

The importance of science, technology and innovation as key enablers to propel the defence and sustainable economic development nexus, cannot be overemphasised. Riding on the Heritage Based Education 5.0 Policy, I exhort the Ministry of Defence and War Veterans Affairs to prioritise the establishment of innovation hubs and industrial parks within its learning and training institutions. This is more urgent given the role the military must play as a strategic entity in the modernisation and industrialisation of our great country.

Furthermore, in the context of the Fourth Industrial Revolution and what will entail to modern day warfare, the Zimbabwe Defence Forces must develop capabilities for creating inventions and “proudly Zimbabwean” military products, hardware and software. I challenge you to be active participants in the ongoing “innovation revolution” being championed by my Administration.

The continued linkages and collaboration between the Zimbabwe Staff College and other foreign Command and Staff Colleges through regular staff exchanges and joint exercises is commendable. I urge you to harness your participation in the Combined Joint African Exercise **UHURU**, which was attended by Botswana, South Africa and Zambia to refocus our role in the collective regional peace and security architecture.

As Commander-in-Chief, I recognise the indelible mark of professionalism which the Defence Forces is renowned for on the international scene. I congratulate you for the continued excellent and deserved recognition as reliable and principled guarantors of the stability, peace and security of our jurisdiction and beyond.

You have done exceptionally well at regional and international levels. This legacy should be jealously protected and continue to be enriched. These achievements are indeed attributed to the high levels of professionalism, discipline and diligence that characterise the Zimbabwe Defence Forces, this is courtesy of the high quality personnel training and development programmes within our various institutions.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Our capacity to deal with cyber-space based threats lies in developing a keen interest in technological developments, which have become a key determinant in the success of dealing with security challenges.

The transformation of the battlefield to cyberspace has provided a platform for the rise and spread of terrorism, politically motivated violent extremism as well as the spread of hate speech and disinformation. Thus, special attention needs to be made in ensuring speedy assimilation of knowledge and skills which will allow the officers of our Defence Forces, to robustly and proactively counter these contemporary threats.

To the Graduands;

The Joint Command and Staff Course has equipped you with the requisite knowledge and skills to professionally carry out your duties. It has also provided you with the requisite intellectual foundation for further studies. As the Commander-In-Chief, it is my expectation that you will continue to promote the organisational culture of the Defence Force which is characterised in its disciplined nature, high degree of professionalism, patriotism and loyalty.

I further challenge you to deploy your skills of critical thinking and strategic management towards successfully executing the roles and responsibilities you assume in your careers.

Meanwhile, I commend the Ministry of Defence and War Veterans Affairs, Commander Defence Forces and the Command element for continually attending to the manpower development needs of our Defence Forces, more-so in an environment characterised by the COVID-19 pandemic. Equally, I am grateful to the Academia, Government, Industry and Commerce among other stakeholders, who contributed towards the success of the Joint Command and Staff Course Number 34.

To the Commandant of the Zimbabwe Staff College, Brigadier General Joe Muzvidziwa and your staff, I congratulate you for the hard-work towards the success of the Joint Command and Staff Course Number 34, we are witnessing today.

Finally, I congratulate the graduands for a job well done and urge you to remain resolute in defence of our nation and the aspirations of our people. Go and practice what you have learnt here, and shun corruption and all unpatriotic behaviour, strive to do well in all facets of your lives. Serve your country whole heartedly. Once again, well done to you all. **Makorokoto , Amhlope, Congratulations.**

God Bless you.

God Bless Zimbabwe.

I thank you.