

## **TWELFTH POST-CABINET PRESS BRIEFING**

**10<sup>TH</sup> MAY, 2022**

### **1.0 ZIMBABWE'S RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND REPORT ON THE PROCUREMENT AND ROLLOUT OF VACCINES**

Cabinet received an update on the Country's Response to the Covid-19 Pandemic and a Report on the Procurement and Roll-Out of Vaccines, as presented by the Chairman of the Ministers' COVID-19 National Committee, Vice President and Minister of Health and Child Care, Honourable Dr. C.G.D.N. Chiwenga.

The nation is advised that, as at 9 May 2022, the country's cumulative COVID-19 cases stood at 248 531, with 242 118 recoveries and 5 479 deaths. The recovery rate was 98%, with 785 active cases having been reported. The number of new COVID-19 cases continued to decrease, with 361 cases having been recorded, compared to the 437 recorded the previous week, marking a 17% decline. While the country is doing well in its response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Cabinet, nonetheless, calls upon citizens to remain vigilant and strictly observe the national and World Health Organisation (WHO) COVID-19 protocols, and the relevant regulations will continue to be strictly enforced. Furthermore, there is need to closely monitor the situation in schools for the coming few weeks before allowing the resumption of sporting activities in the institutions, given that

the re-opening of schools and onset of winter is usually associated with increased cases of COVID-19.

Regarding the national vaccination programme, Cabinet wishes to inform the nation that, as at 9 May 2022, a total of 5 924 932 first doses of the COVID-19 vaccine had been administered, while 3 868 126 people had received their second dose, and 647 049 their third. This translates to a national coverage of 53%, up from the 52% recorded the previous week. Cabinet calls upon all citizens that have not been vaccinated to present themselves for vaccination at centres nearest to them. All provinces will now ramp up vaccination under the Phase II Vaccination Blitz Campaign Programme by working closely with community leaders.

## **2.0 PROPOSED PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN DINSON IRON AND STEEL COMPANY (DISCO) (PRIVATE) LIMITED AND THE ZIMBABWE ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION AND DISTRIBUTION COMPANY (ZETDC)**

The Minister of Finance and Economic Development, Honourable Professor Mthuli Ncube, presented the Proposed Partnership between Dinson Iron and Steel Company (Private) Limited and the Zimbabwe Electricity Transmission and Distribution Company (ZETDC) for the Construction of a 330 kiloVolt (kV), 100 kilometre (km) Electricity Line from Sherwood (Kwekwe) to Manhize, Chivhu, which was approved by Cabinet.

Cabinet would like to highlight that Dinson Iron and Steel Company (DISCO) (Pvt) (Ltd) is setting up a Greenfield Integrated iron and steel plant, alongside mining of iron in the Chivhu District of Mashonaland East Province and Chirumanzu District of the Midlands Province. The US\$750 million investment will significantly contribute to the country's economic growth. DISCO has accordingly applied to be connected to the national electricity grid in order to access the requisite power for its plant operations. The electricity transmission line will stretch from the Kwekwe-Sherwood Substation to DISCO's iron and steel manufacturing plant at Manhize in Chivhu.

To finance this connection, ZETDC will enter into a Public Private Partnership (PPP) agreement, whereby DISCO will pre-finance both phases of the construction project, as a loan to the utility company. The loan will be recovered from ZETDC through deductions from DISCO's monthly bills until the loan is paid up, over an estimated 5-year period. Cabinet invites the public to note that this electricity line will not only be dedicated to DISCO, but will also be available to other ZETDC customers along the way. In term of the PPP, the utility will use 40% of the electricity. During Phase I of the project, DISCO will require only a fraction of its 60% allocation, leaving the rest available to ZETDC. The partnership will, therefore, allow DISCO to access a reliable and regular supply of power from ZETDC for their iron mining and processing operations on time. Local communities will also benefit by receiving consistent power supplies.

Other benefits of the power-line project include the following:

- (i) that ZETDC will have an asset on its balance sheet immediately after commissioning;
- (ii) that direct employment of about 300 skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled jobs will be created during the construction phase of the project, with at least 80% of the general labourforce coming from the local communities;
- (iii) that the country's power transmission capability will be augmented and reinforced; and
- (iv) that the construction of the power-line will capacitate Zimbabwe to substantially contribute to the regional Southern African Power Pool (SAPP), which facilitates trade in power across Southern Africa, thereby significantly increasing the country's revenue inflows.

### **3.0 UPDATE ON THE LOCALISATION OF THE FERTILISER VALUE CHAIN**

Cabinet received an update on the localisation of the Fertilizer Value Chain, as presented by the Minister of Industry and Commerce, Honourable Dr. Sekai Nzenza.

Cabinet wishes to inform the nation that the local fertilizer industry is accelerating the implementation of the Five-Year Fertiliser Import Substitution Roadmap (2020-2024). The objective is to increase local production of phosphates and ammonium nitrate in order to reduce

fertilizer imports. To this end, the Industrial Development Corporation of Zimbabwe (IDC) has invested into the local fertilizer value chain, from extraction of phosphates to the granulation of basal fertilizers. The company is modernising operations at its subsidiaries at Dorowa Minerals and Zimphos in order to increase production. Meanwhile, Sable Chemical has secured a loan from Afreximbank for the refurbishment of its plant and equipment as well as purchasing rail tank cars. Sable Chemicals' target is to produce 120 000 metric tonnes of Ammonium Nitrate for the 2022/23 farming season.

Cabinet notes that the fertilizer production sector plays a critical role in ensuring successful agricultural production, which is the bedrock of our economy. Government is thus looking at ways of recapitalizing the sector, including through listing on the stock exchange in order to attract suitable investors.

Presently, annual national demand of fertilizers stands at 350 000 metric tonnes of phosphates and 250 000 metric tonnes of ammonium nitrate. Although the local fertilizer industry is currently operating at 30% of its capacity utilization, indications are that local production is increasing leading to the reduction of imports.

Regarding the 2022 Winter Cropping Season, Cabinet wishes to inform the nation that the local fertilizer industry has adequate stocks to supply the existing Winter Input Programmes as well as other commercial and retail

needs. The available fertilizer includes carry-over stock from the previous season and stocks under the Collateral Management Arrangement (CMA), which will be released once the required funding has been disbursed.

#### **4.0 PROGRESS REPORTS ON PRIORITY PROJECTS FOR THE FIRST 100-DAY CYCLE OF 2022**

Cabinet received reports on progress made in the implementation of priority projects for the 1<sup>st</sup> 100-Day Cycle of 2022, as presented by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Primary and Secondary Education, Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare, and the Minister of State for Presidential Affairs and Monitoring Implementation of Government Programmes.

**1. The Minister of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare, Honourable Professor Paul Mavima** reported that the progress recorded for projects under his purview are as follows:

- (i) The Migrant Resource Centre, which was established to empower potential migrants to make informed decisions that affect their mobility, will be launched soon;
- (ii) 252 children living on the streets of Harare, Bulawayo, Mutare and Masvingo were identified with some placed in safe places while others were reunited with their families;

- (iii) The project on mapping of supplies of assistive devices for persons with disabilities in all provinces, was successfully carried out; and
- (iv) Under nutritional gardens, 8 boreholes were drilled in the informal sectors of Harare, Bulawayo, Bindura and Chivhu. In Tsholotsho, 1 borehole was drilled and 2 fencing perimeters for 2 nutritional gardens were erected for the sustainable livelihood of the San community.

**2. The Minister of Primary and Secondary Education, Honourable Dr. Evelyn Ndhlovu** reported progress on projects under her purview as follows:

- 44 schools were registered nationwide including ECD Centres, Primary and Secondary schools and an Independent College;
- The upgrading of infrastructure is on-going at 80 schools, and this includes those destroyed by Cyclone Idai;
- Learner modules continue to be developed and 2 e-libraries were established in each of the 7 provinces as strategies to ensure continued learning during the COVID-19 pandemic; and
- Interactive Radio Lessons covering curriculum content as well as offering guidance and counseling to students were introduced.

**3. The Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Honourable Dr. Frederick Makamure Shava** reported that the following progress had been recorded on projects under his purview:

- (i) Participation at the Dubai Expo and the Zimbabwe National Day leading to the successful promotion of Zimbabwe as an excellent investment destination and the signing of a number of Memoranda of Understanding with potential investors;
- (ii) A Bi-National Commission was convened with Botswana in Victoria Falls leading to the signing of 5 Agreements;
- (iii) Participation at the 6<sup>th</sup> African Union-European Union (AU-EU) Summit in Brussels, where His Excellency the President, Cde E.D. Mnangagwa, invited European investors to consider investing in all sectors of the Zimbabwean economy.

**4. The Minister of State for Presidential Affairs and Monitoring Implementation of Government Programmes, Honourable Dr. Joram Gumbo** reported on progress recorded under the District Development Fund (DDF) as follows:

- (i) 3 bridges at Gunguhwe (Gokwe North), Somgolo (Lupane) and Musukwe (Hurungwe) are under construction and at different levels of completion. In addition, pipe drifts at Gonde (Matabeleland South) and Ngomahuru (Masvingo), are work in progress and will be completed by the end of the cycle;
- (ii) Under road maintenance, the Siyawareva-Chenhaka (Masvingo) and Mbembesanwa-Marimunha (Matabeleland South) roads have been completed, while the Binga-Siyakobvu (Binga), Nyakasikana-Masango-Karanda (Mt Darwin) and Monte Casino (Marondera) roads are at different stages of completion;



- (iii) Procurement of materials for rehabilitating spillways of Nyamavanga Dam (Zvimba) and Chantali is in progress;
- (iv) Rehabilitation of canals at the Chigondo Scheme (Hwedza), is progressing well;
- (v) 2 piped water schemes were constructed and completed at Chitida (Hwedza) and (Nyamandlovu Tsholotsho);
- (vi) 1 188 boreholes out of the targeted 1 400 have been maintained; and
- (vii) 8 staff houses are under construction at Nenyuka Primary School (Gokwe North).

Honourable Gumbo also presented an overview of progress made on projects under the Ministry of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs, on behalf of Honourable Ziyambi Ziyambi, including agricultural projects on prison farms, construction of 17 blocks of houses at Chikurubi Maximum Dog Training School and Gunhill Staff Housing Project, decentralization of the Legal Aid Directorate (LAD) to District Level, and Construction of the Lupane, Gwanda, Chiredzi, and Epworth New Magistrate Court Complexes.

## **5.0 ELECTRICITY AMENDMENT BILL, 2022**

Cabinet considered and approved the Electricity Amendment Bill, 2022, which was presented by the Attorney-General, Honourable Prince Machaya, on behalf of the Minister of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs.

The Bill introduces stiffer penalties for the abstraction or diversion of electricity, or the use of such electricity knowing that it was illegally abstracted or diverted. The Bill will also remove the option of a fine where one is convicted of the crime. Furthermore, the Bill introduces stiffer penalties for the transportation of material used in connection with the generation, transmission, distribution or supply of electricity without the option of a fine.

ZESA is suffering huge losses due to theft and vandalism of the national electricity infrastructure. In 2021, ZESA recorded 1 237 cases of theft and vandalism, resulting in huge losses of revenue, which could have been used for development. The Amendment Bill will deter would-be offenders through stiffer and mandatory sentences.

## **6.0 MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE REPUBLICS OF ZIMBABWE AND SOUTH AFRICA IN THE FIELD OF BASIC EDUCATION**

The Attorney-General, Honourable Prince Machaya, again presented the Memorandum of Understanding between the Republics of Zimbabwe and South Africa in the Field of Basic Education, which was adopted by Cabinet.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) will foster co-operation between the two Parties in the following areas, among others:

1. Exchange of delegations, experts and academics in the field of primary and secondary education;
2. Learner enrolment and teacher training, whereby the Parties shall, upon request, facilitate the mutual enrolment of learners in their respective secondary schools;
3. Exchange of information and participation in educational conferences organized by the Parties;
4. Promoting the co-operation of learning institutions and high commissions of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in the respective Parties' countries; and
5. Sharing information on schools' infrastructure development, teacher development, curriculum development and in assessments and examinations.

## **7.0 REPORT ON THE AFRICAN MEDICINES AGENCY (AMA) ASSESSMENT VISIT: 19 – 23 APRIL 2022**

Cabinet was briefed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Honourable Dr. Fredrick Makamure Shava, on the African Medicines Agency (AMA) Assessment Team Visit held from 19 to 23 April, 2022. Cabinet adopted the Report.

The nation is informed that the Assessment Team sought to evaluate Zimbabwe's bid to host the AMA Headquarters as well as to inspect the relevant facilities. The AMA delegation was led by Professor Aggrey John

Douglas Ambali, from the African Union Development Agency (AUDA), while the Zimbabwean team was led by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. Zimbabwe had submitted its bid to host the AMA Headquarters in July 2021.

The team embarked on verification visits of all sites being offered by Zimbabwe in its bid to host the Headquarters. The sites visited were as follows:

- Celestial Office Part to host the AMA Secretariat offices and laboratory;
- Mount Hampden for the construction of the permanent AMA Secretariat and laboratory;
- Parirenyatwa Group of Hospitals for the AMA Team to appreciate the facilities of a public referral hospital;
- The proposed residence of the AMA Director-General at Borrowdale Brooke;
- Hotel facilities to determine their suitability and availability of the such facilities;
- The Harare International Conference Centre (HICC) to evaluate conferencing facilities;
- Borrowdale Police and Greendale Fire Brigade; and
- Robert Gabirel Mugabe International Airport to assess the Aviation Ground Services (AGS) and the CEVA Logistics cold chain supply facilities.

## **8.0 ONGOING GOVERNMENT INTERVENTIONS TO IMPROVE THE URBAN AREAS PUBLIC TRANSPORT SYSTEM**

Cabinet was briefed by the Minister of Local Government and Public Works, Honourable July Moyo, on the Urban Areas Public Transport System, following His Excellency the President's Statement on the opening up of the of the public transportation sector to private players.

Government is in process of coming up with relevant regulations to enable liberalization of the public transport sector. These will include the licensing of operators on any given route. The regulations will go a long way in alleviating the plight of urban commuters. Government takes this opportunity to assure citizens that it has the travelling public's interests at heart, and will expend all efforts to ensure that the situation is expeditiously ameliorated. The nation will be kept abreast of developments on this matter.

**I THANK YOU!**