

## **SIXTEENTH POST-CABINET PRESS BRIEFING**

**14<sup>TH</sup> JUNE, 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 Vice President and Minister of Health and Child Care, Honourable Dr. C.G.D.N. Chiwenga.

The nation is advised that, as at 13 June 2022, the country's cumulative COVID-19 cases stood at 254 155, with 246 566 recoveries and 5 521 deaths. The recovery rate was 97 %, with 2 078 active cases having been reported. The number of new COVID-19 cases decreased by 39% to 758 cases, from the 1 241 recorded the previous week. The resurgence analysis by province shows that Bulawayo Metropolitan Province which was the only province with a more than 10% increase in new cases last week, has now also recorded a less than 10% increase. The Ministry of Health and Child Care is ready to introduce COVID-19 self-test kits, mainly at points of entry and remote areas, in order to ramp up testing in all communities.

Regarding the national vaccination programme, Cabinet wishes to highlight that, as at 12 June 2022, a total of 6 249 549 first doses of the COVID-19 vaccine had been administered, while 4 581 185 people had received their

second dose, and 841 330 their third dose. This translates to a national coverage of 55.6%, compared to 55.5% recorded the previous week.

Accordingly, all provinces will continue strengthening implementation of public health and social measures as part of the new normal and of keeping COVID-19 in check.

Cabinet also discussed about the food deficit measures and directed that a committee be set up to expedite the food deficit mitigation programme.

## **2.0 PROGRESS REPORT ON THE GWAYI-SHANGANI DAM**

Cabinet received a Progress Report on Gwayi-Shangani Dam and Associated Gwayi-Shangani Irrigation Development and Hydro Power Generation as presented by the Minister of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development Honourable Dr Anxious Jongwe Masuka.

Cabinet wishes to inform the nation that construction of the Gwayi-Shangani dam is now at 66.2% completion. The contractor is now working on the dam wall. The process of gazetting the Gwayi-Shangani dam as a lake is in progress. Excavations for the permanent access road commenced on 14 March 2022. The road will provide access to the mini-hydropower house.

The nation is also informed that contracts for civil works for the pipeline were signed on 7 April 2022, and sites were handed over to 11 contractors. All the

contractors are now on site, and 68 km of the 252 km of the pipeline route have been cleared, while 6 km have been excavated. The 220 Mega Litres per day Treatment Plant at Cowdray Park is at the tendering stage, with bids having closed on 10 June 2022. About 800megalitres of the treated water will be pumped directly to the 108 ML Magwegwe Clear Water Reservoir for onward distribution to the City of Bulawayo.

Regarding hydro-power generation, the final design capacity of the plant is 10megawatts The Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA) and the Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA) will finalise the designs of the mini-hydropower plant and the subsequent electricity evacuation infrastructure by end of this month. The power generated will be fed into the national grid and assist in achieving self-sufficiency in power generation as well as rural industrialisation for the benefit of local communities.

On irrigation development, Government has engaged chiefs in Lupane, Binga and Hwange. The communities have understood the thrust of the projects and has generated a lot of interest among them. Both communal and commercial irrigation blocks have been identified. The process of identifying irrigation pumping points is now complete. The 200 hectare per district under the Vision 2030 accelerator model is receiving urgent priority, and the irrigation for Bulawayo peri-urban areas was discussed. The Ministry of National Housing and Social Amenities is working on model rural homesteads designs, and the proposed design drawings, complete with costs will be produced by 1 July 2022. The homesteads will have modern ablution

facilities. Valuations for compensation of households around the dam that need to be relocated have been completed. The thrust is building formal and better houses with modern designs reflecting rural development as espoused in Vision 2030.

Cabinet has directed the following:

1. that Gwayi Valley Primary school be allocated more land and funds to build more classrooms and teacher's houses;
2. that there be greater involvement of the community and its leadership in planning for their community development; and
3. that focus on the feasibility of supplying schools along the pipeline with water for drinking and agricultural activities commences.

Cabinet further directed an acceleration of the project in line with Vision 2030.

### **3.0 ACCESSION OF ZIMBABWE TO NUCLEAR ENERGY CONVENTIONS, PROTOCOLS AND AGREEMENTS**

Cabinet considered and adopted Zimbabwe's accession to the following nuclear energy protocol, conventions and agreement, which were presented by the Minister of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs, Honourable Ziyambi Ziyambi, as Chairman of the Cabinet Committee on Legislation:

- Joint Protocol relating to the Application of the Vienna Convention and the Paris Convention;

- International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism;
- Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of International Atomic Energy Agency; and
- Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage.

The benefits of acceding to the Conventions, Protocol and Agreement include the following:

1. that Zimbabwe will enjoy maximum international financial security against damage resulting from the peaceful use of nuclear energy, since ratification will allow Zimbabwean courts to have jurisdiction in matters arising from nuclear damage incidents, with their judgments being binding internationally;
2. that the country will have an effective foundation for the regulatory and legislative framework for nuclear incidents;
3. improvement in Zimbabwe compliance to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) legal instruments and to international laws in general;
4. cooperation with other States in the development of effective technical and legal frameworks to combat nuclear terrorism; and
5. promotion of international peace and security through prevention of nuclear terrorism.

#### **4.0 REPORT ON THE VISIT TO EGYPT BY THE HONOURABLE VICE PRESIDENT AND MINISTER OF HEALTH AND CHILD CARE.**

The Vice President and Minister of Health and Child Care, Honourable Dr C.G.D.N. Chiwenga, briefed Cabinet on his Visit to Egypt from 4 to 8 June 2022, during which he attended the following events:

- the 4<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the African Union Specialised Technical Committee on Health, Population and Drug Control; and
- the 1<sup>st</sup> African Medical Conference and Exhibition (Africa Health Excon).

The Vice President and Minister of Health and Care also met the Egyptian Prime Minister and the Egyptian Minister of Health and Population, as well as representatives of INTRAPHARMA, the central Egyptian pharmaceuticals company, on the establishment of a 50-50 joint venture pharmaceutical company as an import substitution programme in line with the local content strategy.

Cabinet wishes to advise the nation that the 4<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the African Union Specialised Technical Committee on Health, Population and Drug Control was held under the theme *"Advancing health security and socio-economic well-being of Africa's population: Value nutrition as an intervention"*. The Conference deliberated on ensuring equitable access to health technologies, pharmaceuticals and healthcare services. Highlights included the concerns raised over the increasing incidents of drug abuse in Africa, which is negatively impacting the continent's economic growth.

The 1<sup>st</sup> African Medical Conference and Exhibition (Africa Health Excon) was held under the theme *"Your Gate to Innovation and Trade"*. During the Excon Panel Discussion, the Vice President and Minister of Health and Child Care

was able to highlight, among others issues, the need for human capacity development; self-sufficiency in pharmaceuticals and equipment manufacturing; improvement in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene; addressing issues of substance abuse among the youth; and emergency medicine response and planning.

Meanwhile, engagements with the Egyptian Prime Minister, Minister of Health and Population, and INTRAPHARMA are expected to result in the relevant Memoranda of Understanding being signed soon. A tour of the Egyptian New Administrative City, which the Vice President and Minister of Health and Child Care undertook, provided invaluable insights which will be incorporated in the development of Zimbabwe's own New City in Mt Hampden. A Joint Permanent Commission between Zimbabwe and Egypt will be reconvened to give impetus to areas of cooperation in the fields of Health and Pharmaceuticals, Construction and Agriculture, among others etc.

## **5.0 REPORT ON THE FIRST ORDINARY SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATE PARTIES OF THE AFRICAN MEDICINES AGENCY (AMA)**

Cabinet received a report on the First Ordinary Session of the State Parties of the African Medicines Agency (AMA) as presented by the Vice President and Minister of Health and Child Care, Honourable Dr. C.G.D.N. Chiwenga.

The nation is informed that the First Ordinary Session of the Conference of State Parties of AMA was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 1 – 3 June 2022. The meeting discussed the following: rules of procedure of the Conference of State Parties (CoSP); election of the Bureau of the CoSP to the AMA Treaty; and Assessment Report on the hosting of the AMA Headquarters. Zimbabwe is offering to be considered to host the Regional Centre of Excellence for the Southern Africa Region.

**I THANK YOU!**