



REMARKS

BY

**THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF
ZIMBABWE,**

HIS EXCELLENCY, DR. E.D. MNANGAGWA

AT THE

**ICC MEN'S T 20 WORLD CUP
QUALIFIER B 2022**

BULAWAYO, ZIMBABWE

10 JULY 2022

Director of Ceremonies;

Chairman of ZANU PF and Minister of Defence and War Veterans Affairs, Hon. O. C. Z. Muchinguri Kashiri;

Minister of Youth, Sport, Arts and Recreation, Hon. Dr. K. Coventry;

Minister of State for Bulawayo Metropolitan Province, Hon. J. Ncube;

Deputy Minister of Youth, Sport, Arts and Recreation, Hon. T. Machakaire;

Zimbabwe Cricket Chairman, Hon. T. Mukuhlani;

Chairperson of the Sports and Recreation Commission Board Mr. G. Mlotshwa and staff;

Senior Government Officials here present;

International Cricket Council delegates here present;

Members of the Local Organising Committee;

Cricket Players, Coaches and Officials;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is my singular honour to be addressing you today at this official opening ceremony of the International Cricket Council's Men's T20 World Cup Qualifier B. On behalf of the Government and people of Zimbabwe, and indeed on my own behalf, I warmly welcome you all the distinguished visitors, cricketers, and officials as well as the accompanying members of the media fraternity. I trust that you have found the preparations made for the hosting of this event, satisfactory. Please feel at home and enjoy the acclaimed Zimbabwean hospitality.

As Zimbabwe, we count it a privilege to be hosting a tournament of such magnitude and global significance right here in the City of Bulawayo, which is our second largest City. We are, thus, greatly humbled that the International Cricket Council has once again afforded us the opportunity to host such an event. This is the fifth ICC tournament that we are hosting within the last six years. Others have included the Africa regional

women's competitions as well as the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Qualifier in 2018 and most recently, the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup Qualifier held in 2021. This shows the confidence which the International Cricket Council has in Zimbabwe's conducive environment which enables the successful hosting of such event. To this end, I want to commend the leadership of Zimbabwe Cricket, and other sporting stakeholders and partners both local and international who have supported our journey as a cricket playing nation even during the difficult years.

The fact that the eight teams participating at this tournament, Hong Kong, Jersey, the Netherlands, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, Uganda, the United States of America and of course Zimbabwe, are drawn from the different Continents, is set to add diversity and jamboree atmosphere to this sporting duel.

It is also an example of the role sport plays in uniting people from diverse backgrounds as well as the ability to speak to us all in a language we all understand. Although the stakes are extremely high, with the winners set to take up the two remaining places at the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2022 to be staged in Australia later this year, I trust that you will all enjoy the event and exhibit fair play and the great sportsmanship, which cricket is renowned for.

As you will discover in the next few days, ours is a country where cricket is more than a game but an enduring passion among our youth and adult fans, alike. For some, they find cricket irresistible because it is said to be a gentlemen's game (I don't know now with the very vibrant women's cricket how that adage has evolved). For others, it is an excuse to sit in the sun all day relaxing with family and friends, whilst enjoying their beverage of choice.

Whatever the reasons, cricket is a sport enjoyed by many, and indeed Zimbabwe is a cricket loving country.

Some may recall that the last time our nation had the privilege of hosting a tournament of this magnitude, thousands of fans packed our stadia, singing and dancing, chanting and clapping , undeterred even when it rained. Based on that background, you are all assured of very lively spectators in our carnival atmosphere that is uniquely Zimbabwean.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen;

Allow me to highlight that the Government of Zimbabwe is committed to providing an environment which allows sports-persons, from various disciplines, to grow and realise their full potential. In doing so, we are determined to leave no one and no place behind.

Presently, my Administration is formulating the Sport and Recreation Policy, which seeks to promote the inclusive participation of previously marginalised

communities. This is aimed at re-modelling our sporting sector into an inclusive and viable industry.

It is my hope that during your brief stay in Zimbabwe you will have the opportunity to visit a few towns and villages where some of our young talented boys and girls are being nurtured in various sports, including in cricket. These sport based youth development programmes are being undertaken, in some cases, under an environment of limitations, in terms of sporting equipment and facilities. We recognise and commend various local and International partnerships which are assisting us in our endeavour to develop sport in our country. Going forward, I hope that the ICC will strengthen its cooperation with Zimbabwe Cricket through broader synergies and support.

The hosting of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup Qualifier B 2022 is indeed a show of confidence and support in the strides Zimbabwe is making towards the

development of cricket, not only in our country but on the African continent as a whole.

Esteemed Guests;

Let me take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the International Cricket Council for Zimbabwe's nomination to co-host the ICC Men's World Cup 2027, alongside our Southern African neighbours, Namibia and South Africa. As a Government, we stand 'kitted out; pads, gloves and helmets on' to play our part towards the success of that event.

Turning back to this particular event, I invite us all to enjoy great, entertaining and competitive cricket. I am optimistic that this is guaranteed, given the quality of the teams taking part at this qualifying tournament.

Time permitting; you are welcome to visit any of our world renowned tourist attractions and world heritage sites. It is my hope that when you return to your respective countries, you will have fond memories of

this T20 World Cup Qualifier, and your time in our country, ***“Zimbabwe, the World of Wonders.”***

Finally, on behalf of my Government and the people of Zimbabwe, I once again extend a warm welcome to everyone involved in the ICC Men’s T20 World Cup Qualifier 2022, and wish you every success and good health.

With these remarks, I am delighted to declare the ICC Men’s T20 World Cup Qualifier B 2022 officially open. May the best teams win.

God bless you all.

I thank you.