



**ADDRESS**

**BY**

**THE PRESIDENT, HIS EXCELLENCY,  
DR. E. D. MNANGAGWA**

**AT THE**

**BUY ZIMBABWE 2022 PUBLIC PROCUREMENT  
CONFERENCE AND AWARDS CEREMONY**

**6 JULY 2022**

Director of Ceremonies;

Vice President and Minister of Health and Child Care,  
Hon. Gen. (Rtd) Dr. C. G. D. N. Chiwenga;

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

Minister of State for Harare Metropolitan Province,  
Hon. Sen. Eng. O. Chidawu;

Minister of Industry and Commerce,  
Hon. Dr. S. I. Nzenza;

Minister of Finance and Economic Development,  
Hon. Prof. M. Ncube;

Other Honourable Ministers, here present;

Chief Secretary to the President and Cabinet,  
Dr. M. J. M. Sibanda;

Senior Government Officials;

Chairperson of the Buy Zimbabwe Trust,  
Mr. M. Hwengwere;

Auditor General, Ms Mildred Chiri;

The Board Chairperson of the Procurement Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe, Mrs. V. Nyemba;

Captains of Industry and Commerce;

Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is my singular honour and privilege to address this inaugural Public Procurement Conference and Awards Ceremony, running under the theme, **‘Unlocking Zimbabwe’s Economic Potential Through Public Procurement.’**

As we build our motherland, Zimbabwe, guided by our development philosophy **“Nyika inovakwa nevene vayo”**, inclusive public procurement is critical in the delivery of quality services and the overall performance of Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies.

This Conference is thus timely and resonates with the Second Republic’s unwavering thrust to realise sustainable development and inclusive economic

growth for our people, which leaves no one and no place behind.

In the wake of the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and other global shocks we must strengthen our national resolve to ‘build back better’. It is equally critical that we scale up our country’s internal capacities, across all sectors. To this end, public procurement must be viewed more holistically, not only as a public administration tool, to purchase the needed goods and services, but also as a vehicle to lift many of our people from poverty into prosperity.

At an international level, under the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals; the promotion of sustainable public procurement will help our country realise these Goals, specifically SDG 12.7 and SDG 16.6 which target public procurement.

Let me from the onset express my gratitude to the Buy Zimbabwe Trust for organising this event, which follows the organisation's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary commemorations, in May 2021. I further commend the broad topics which will be covered during this Conference. I trust that the various presentations will enrich stakeholders to effectively play their part in the development of our country, for win-win outcomes.

Further, discussions at this forum should ensure that Government, business and other stakeholders are of a common understanding towards accelerating our country's industrialisation, modernisation and economic growth. Equally, the implementation of the Local Content Strategy must be harnessed towards promoting the **“Made in Zimbabwe; Buy Zimbabwe and Build Zimbabwe”** initiative, for the speedy attainment of our country's Vision 2030.

It is gratifying to note that the various economic reforms being championed by my Administration, coupled with concerted efforts of organisations such as the Buy Zimbabwe Trust, has seen locally produced goods now dominating shelf spaces. To consolidate this trend, my Government remains committed to fostering an enabling business environment and availing the requisite support to increase capacity utilisation in our country's manufacturing sector.

Similarly, research and development as well as the registration of patents, support for innovation and inventions are being scaled up in a bid to have more locally made goods and services. The Second Republic is thus determined to support an entrepreneurial and innovative culture that will see our own young people answer the day to day needs of our country's fast evolving and modernising socio-economic landscape.

## **Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen;**

Public procurement must be deployed responsibly and in the national interest, not only as an empowerment vehicle but most importantly to accelerate sustainable national development. It is against this background that all public procurement entities are exhorted to utilise public resources in the most efficient, transparent, accountable, responsive and ethical manner.

In this regard, I congratulate local contractors for the sterling and professional work being undertaken in the construction and rehabilitation of our highways and roads. Only last week, I had the opportunity to drive along the Harare-Masvingo highway *en route* to an engagement at the Great Zimbabwe Monuments. The road is indeed impressive and a testimony of our abilities as a people. This culture of building our own country, ourselves, brick by brick, stone upon stone must transcend to all sectors of the economy.

I was happy to observe, during the Zimbabwe International Trade Fair, that more and more of our local companies are producing quality and internationally competitive goods and services.

We must unapologetically continue to grow our own food, invent and manufacture the products we use, build our own dams, factories, health and education infrastructure. Zimbabweans can do it. Nothing is impossible.

**Ladies and Gentlemen;**

As will be outlined by the various Ministers who will address this Conference, vast opportunities exist in our public entities across all sectors of the economy. This follows the bold, decisive and revolutionary decision of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic under my leadership to fundamentally transform Zimbabwe through the awarding of procurement contracts and tenders to local enterprises.



This has significantly helped to create and domesticate employment as well as improve our skills levels, while also saving the country, foreign currency.

I, however, recognise that public procurement is one of the government activities most vulnerable to corruption. The volume of transactions and the financial interests at stake, compound corruption risks which are exacerbated by the complexity of the process, the close interaction between public officials and businesses, and the multitude of stakeholders.

In implementing this deliberate policy of my Government, it is imperative that our public procurement ensures value for money, whilst entrenching a culture of competition and promoting transparency, accountability as well as the prudent use of public resources. Additionally, fair and just business practices must be ingrained in our procurement cycle.

All stakeholders should work harder to realise robust procurement frameworks and systems that ultimately deliver quality public goods and services.

It is noteworthy that this Conference and Awards Ceremony comes at a time when the Procurement Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe is working on a number of reforms to plug out corruption.

Due diligence and meticulous administration of tenders across Government Ministries, Departments, Agencies, Public Entities and State Owned Enterprises must remain key components of public procurement. Under the Second Republic, deserving, capable and competent service providers with demonstrable local content should be awarded tenders and contracts.

Meanwhile, the adoption and use of e-procurement and e-payment systems must be speeded up to lessen face to face interface between bidders and those doing the tendering process.

ICTs and administrative compliance measures must be deployed to eliminate interference, collusion, bid rigging or fraud by procurement officials. Wherever corruption occurs in the public procurement process, the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission, together with other law enforcement agencies, must decisively apply the law, without fear or favour.

### **Distinguished Delegates;**

In the spirit of leaving no one and no place behind, my Government is committed to the promotion of inclusive public procurement to help Zimbabweans start, build and grow viable businesses. However, it is most unfortunate that, to date, women, youth entrepreneurs and the disabled face disproportionately complex and interconnected barriers to accessing equal opportunities in public procurement.

We must as stakeholders, tap into public procurement for women and youth empowerment to unleash the full potential of these important demographics.

This will also go a long way towards, providing a springboard for the advancements, economic inclusion and participation of women and youth in the mainstream economy.

I, therefore, urge stakeholders in the public procurement cycle to implement responsive strategies to curb the legal and regulatory hurdles, socio-cultural biases and lack of skills, networks and financing, which limit the involvement of women and youth in public procurement.

Additionally, the public procurement system must be accessible to SMEs through responsive procurement policies such as the use of quotas for suppliers. It is also critically important to close the information gap and build capacities through training on certification, registration and equipping suppliers with management tools, among other aspects. This will help broaden those who can participate in public procurement.

I further challenge the Procurement Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe to refine the procurement policy and procedures to attract and ensure long term commitment by investors. PRAZ is directed to be a catalyst and not an impediment to our national development agenda.

**Ladies and Gentlemen;**

I commend the Buy Zimbabwe Trust for recognising the efforts being made by both the public and private buyers towards promoting and supporting local procurement. Procuring from local companies will indeed go a long way in empowering our entrepreneurs and inculcating a culture of innovation, production and productivity, while creating and broadening the national wealth base.

In conclusion, it is my expectation that the deliberations that will take place during this Buy Zimbabwe Public Procurement Conference and Awards Ceremony will enrich our public procurement policies.

Finally, I congratulate those receiving awards for their outstanding role in promoting the growth of our local industry and economy as a whole. Congratulations, Makorokoto, Amhlophe. Keep up the good work.

With these remarks, it is now my singular honour and privilege to declare the Buy Zimbabwe 2022 Public Procurement Conference and Awards Ceremony officially opened.

**God bless you all.**

**God bless Zimbabwe.**

**I thank you.**