



SPEECH

BY

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

AT THE

**THE PASTORS FOR ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE**

HARARE

29 MARCH 2023

Director of Ceremonies;

Our Host, Chairperson of the Pastors for Economic Development, Evangelist Councillor Idirashe Dongo;

First Lady, Amai A. Mnangagwa;

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

Vice President and Second Secretary of ZANU PF, Col (Rtd) K. C. D. Mohadi;

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

Other Honourable Ministers here present;

Senior Government Officials;

Zimbabwe Union Council of Churches President, Bishop Dr. Adv. N. Pavari and other Ministers of Religion here present;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Comrades and Friends.

I am honoured to bear witness to another momentous occasion where men and women, called to be preachers to God's people are gathered together, to chart a common destiny for our beloved motherland Zimbabwe guided by the word of Almighty God. This jubilant occasion is indeed a manifestation of **Psalm 133 verse 1**, "It is pleasant when brothers dwell together in unity". It is the day that the Lord has made, let us all rejoice and be glad as we gather at this Pastors for Economic Development Conference.

This Conference comes a few days before the Easter, which reminds us that God loved the world and came us His only begotten son Jesus Christ, to die for our sins so that we may be have eternal life. By the same token, we must equally use this event to re-commit ourselves to loving each other as one people and to patriotically and wholeheartedly serving our country.

I want to express my profound gratitude to you the Pastors for Economic Development for your

determination and commitment to provide spiritual covering and support to the policies, programmes and activities of the Second Republic.

Guided by the theme of this Conference: **‘Ideology, Empowering and Equipping the Clergy and the Church for Nation Building as we Honour the Ordained Leadership of the Land’** may the love of Almighty God bind us in perfect unity, with one mind and one voice, as we work together under the mandate of this organisation to advance economic development.

Allow me to thank this august congregation of preachers of the Gospel, from diverse denominations, for the Conferment of Ordination Certificate of Recognition and Honour, which I humbly accept. Undoubtedly, this marks a unique moment in my life and service to our great motherland, Zimbabwe. **Ndinokutendayi mose, Ngiyalibonga lonke; I thank you all.**

I further commend the Pastors for Economic Development for calling upon the nation to pray for

economic development as well as your recognition and support for my Government's leadership in conformity to Romans 13 verses 3 to 7. We must all be good stewards over the nation of Zimbabwe which was given to us by God and work hard with the wisdom, to realise our national development aspirations and Vision 2030.

After all, God in the book of Genesis, instructed us "to be fruitful". Congregants in our churches must be encouraged to occupy the space through productive endeavours in the various sectors of the economy. **Jehovah akati tichadya cheziya, neizvozvo, anokomborera mabasa emawoko edu.** So we must work, we must be productive.

As preachers, you also challenge our people to always seek a balance and live upright lives before God as encouraged in **Mathew 6 verse 33** which says, '...seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you'.

Furthermore, according to **Proverbs 21 verse 21** is ‘...whoever pursues righteousness and love, finds life, prosperity and honour”. Hence, organisations such as the Pastors for Economic Development are scriptural and have a place in our *body politik* even as **Proverbs 14 verse 23** says “there is profit in hard work, but mere talk leads to poverty”.

The biased theology that discourages hard work prosperity and sustainable empowerment must be debunked. Under the Second Republic, our people deserve a higher quality of life and they should prosper and be in good health even as their souls prosper.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

I applaud the role played by the Church towards inculcating, nurturing and preserving high moral values and ethics within our country.

The church must remain the light and salt of our nation; you must never dim your light or lose your saltiness. Churches and organisations such as Pastors for

Economic Development should be instrumental in weaving families, society, communities together in unity, peace, love and harmony.

Your spiritual, philanthropic and multi-dimensional development work in education, health, social protection as well as water and sanitation among other aspects, must be scaled up. In the words of St Francis of Assisi “Preach the Gospel at all times and if necessary use words”. As such, the deeds of the Church must speak louder than words; the most powerful sermons are unspoken. The Church must continue to be exemplary.

Never allow yourselves to be swayed into using religion and the religious space as a tool to advance the nefarious agenda of detractors. Men and women of the cloth together with religious institutions should never be conduits for pushing regionalism, tribalism, division and other neo-imperial propaganda. This is our Zimbabwe, our only home given to us by Almighty God. We have our culture, beliefs, social values and norms. Let us

therefore protect our nation from all kinds of evil defilement, under whatever guise.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

The bond between the people of our motherland, Zimbabwe is sacred and unbreakable, sealed by the blood of the sons and daughters who fought for our freedom and independence. Our forbears fought so that we can inherit this land we now possess. The children of Israel put up memorial stones after crossing the Jordan River into the promised land as a reminder that it was God who took them out of captivity; likewise, when present and future generations look at the Great Zimbabwe Monument, the Khami Monuments, Matopo Hills and other sites such as our National Heroes Acre, may we be emboldened and reminded of the fact that we have a rich history.

Our fore fathers gallantly fought and overcame oppressive colonial subjugation, for our land. Now it is incumbent upon all of us to defend it. Never again shall we people be slaves in our own land. We have been

reunited with our land and the land with the people. The onus is on all of us to be productive.

Nyika inovakwa, inotongwa nevene vayo, Ilizwe lakhiwa libuswe, ngabanikazi balo’. To this end, I commend Pastors for Economic Development for correctly contextualising theology as it relates to the land and entrenching the gospel of hard honest work, production and productivity as well as broad-based economic empowerment and emancipation.

Rest assured that under my Administration polices to ensure that our rich mineral wealth and resources, beautiful terrain, as well as fauna and flora benefit the citizenry of Zimbabwe will continue to be pursued.

All our talents, skills and energies must continue to be harnessed to build our beloved Zimbabwe, brick by brick, stone upon stone.

We have a collective duty to industrialise and modernise our country, and lift many of our people out of poverty into prosperity. Additionally, let us be good stewards as

we consolidate our possession of the land by producing the food we eat as well as the raw materials that feed into other productive sectors of the economy.

With God and hard work, nothing is impossible. We must remain united to overcome all our challenges and obstacles, including the illegal economic sanctions imposed on us by the West.

As we continue to engage on our national development agenda, I welcome proposals with regards empowering and equipping the Church. I want to assure you that under my Administration, the constitutionally enshrined freedoms of religion and worship will be safeguarded.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Regarding the forthcoming Harmonised General Elections, I once again, call upon the Church to preach unity, peace and harmony. On its part, my Administration has put in place measures to ensure that the Elections are peaceful, credible and transparent.

Upholding constitutionalism, the rule of law and non-violence, peace, unity, tolerance, respect and love remain cardinal principles under my Administration, even during this election season.

I call upon Pastors for Economic Development to help us spread this word, before, during and after the elections. Equally, the exercise of one's democratic right to vote must be in the national interest, towards safeguarding of our land, hard-won independence, freedom, democracy and dignity as the unique and sovereign people of Zimbabwe.

I exhort you as pastors and the Church in general; to continually pray and intercede for our country and indeed us in authority so that righteousness may be exalted in our nation and success can be our portion. According to **Joshua 21 verse 45**, may all of God's promises over our country be fulfilled.

Meanwhile, every household, family, community and church has a duty to fight the menace of drug and substance abuse, crime and deviant behaviours. Reflective of **Proverbs 22 verse 6**, let us all train up our children in the way they should go so that when they are older they will not depart from the path of righteousness, discipline, respect, love and harmony. Similarly, we must not spare the rod. A good and loving parent disciplines children, just as Hebrews 12 explains that God disciplines us for our own good.

In conclusion, I exhort Pastors for Economic Development and the entire Church fraternity to continue doing well, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest. Thank you once again for praying and supporting the leadership of this country, right from the village up to national level. May Almighty God continue to bless and grant you wisdom as the Pastor for Economic Development, your leadership and entire membership including those in the Diaspora.

Your patriotism and love for our country is not in vein, God sees and honours your obedience to His word and sacrifices. I wish you success as we work together for the common good of our nation.

With these remarks, it is now my honour and privilege to declare the Pastors for Economic Development Conference officially opened.

God bless you all.

God bless Zimbabwe.

I thank you.