

17TH POST CABINET PRESS BRIEFING

14TH JUNE, 2023

1.0 ZIMBABWE'S RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Cabinet received an update on the Country's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, and Roll-Out of Vaccines, as presented by the Acting Minister of Health and Child Care, Honourable Professor dr Amon Murwira.

The nation is being informed that the cumulative COVID-19 cases as at 13 June, 2023 stood at 265 362, with 259 378 recoveries and 5 703 deaths. The recovery rate was 98% with 281 active cases recorded. There were six recorded deaths during the week compared to two in the previous week. There were 29 new admissions, compared to the 11 recorded the previous week, with 5 being in intensive care.

Regarding the national vaccination programme, a total of 7 345 145 first doses of the COVID-19 vaccine, 5 511 725 second doses and 2 140 084 third doses respectively have so far been administered. The national vaccination coverage increased to 65.3% from 65.2% the previous week.

Cabinet assures the public that the pandemic remains under control. However, communities must continue to prioritise getting vaccinated while continuing to protect themselves by adhering to all recommended COVID-19 Public Health and Social Measures.

2.0 UPDATE ON THE CHOLERA OUTBREAK RESPONSE

Cabinet received an update on the ongoing cholera outbreak, as presented by the Acting Minister of Health and Child Care, Honourable Professor dr Amon Murwira.

The nation is informed that as of 13 June 2023, Zimbabwe's cumulative suspected cases had reached 2 460, with 2 243 recoveries, 16 confirmed deaths, and 47 suspected deaths. The case fatality rate (CFR) for all deaths, confirmed and suspected, was 2.4%.

Regarding the regional situation, a cumulative 154 317 suspected cholera cases have been reported in the African Region with 2 747 deaths having been recorded.

Meanwhile, Cabinet wishes to assure the nation that dissemination of information is ongoing through the Provincial Risk Communication and Community Engagement Committees and that Government continues to pursue a multi-sectoral approach to responding to the cholera outbreak.

3.0 REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF BINGA DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Cabinet received and considered the Report on the Implementation of Binga Development Projects, as presented by the Minister of State for

Presidential Affairs and Monitoring Implementation of Government Programmes, Honourable Dr. J.M. Gumbo.

The nation is informed that the report highlights completed and on-going projects that are being undertaken by Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies in order to create a better future and improved livelihoods for the people of Binga. In particular, the focus of the earmarked transformative projects is on the development of transport, health, education, infrastructure, empowerment initiatives, information communication technology, water and housing, among other sectors.

The Government has scored remarkable success in the implementation of the following: establishment of the Binga Vocational Skills Industrial College; delivery of two ambulances at Binga Hospital; Binga Airstrip rehabilitation; refurbishment of Binga Hospital Mortuary; construction of Chipale clinic; construction of classroom blocks and staff houses at Chibondo, Mulindi, Bulawayo Kraal and Muchesu primary schools as well as carrying out a blitz for the issuance of identification documents to the people of Binga.

Among the ongoing projects are the rehabilitation of Binga-Kamativi and Binga-Siakobvu roads; eight access roads were completed for Chiefs Siansali, Pashu, Dobola, Saba, Siachilaba, Siabuwa, Sinampande and Sinakoma. Construction of Nsungwale floods disaster recovery houses of which 37 are at various stages of completion; the drilling of boreholes for 17 chiefs, drilling of 30 boreholes for Binga North and another 30 for

Binga South; delivery of 31 fishing rigs for the empowerment of women, youths and chiefs. The Government has enhanced local broadcasting services signals in Binga through the distribution of 68 set-top-boxes. The set-top boxes have facilitated connectivity and saw the establishment of Twasumpuka Radio station. So far 110 584 metric tonnes of maize have been distributed to families that require food relief, e-learning and Information Communication Technology Infrastructure deployment are ongoing.

The nation is further informed that in terms of health provision, a total of 16 clinic projects are at various stages of implementation, and expecting mothers' shelters were being constructed at these sites. Cabinet would like to assure the nation that Government will continue walking the talk in delivering projects that can transform the lives of all the people across the nation.

4.0 UPDATE ON THE MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (MSMEs) GRADUATION PROGRAMME

Cabinet received and considered the report on the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Graduation Programme as presented by the Minister of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development, Honourable Dr. S.G.G. Nyoni.

The nation is informed that a graduation programme has been initiated across the country's ten provinces in order to encourage formalisation within the Small and Medium Enterprises sector and honour enterprises

which have grown from one level to another, including those that have graduated to large enterprises.

To date a total of 391 Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) have so far graduated in Harare, Midlands and Manicaland Provinces. The sectors include furniture; chemicals and detergents; clothing; services; manufacturing; agro-processing; leather industry; construction; retail; tourism; arts and culture; agriculture and metal fabrication.

The Midlands MSME Graduation Ceremony was held in December 2022 and was officiated by His Excellency the President, Dr. E.D. Mnangagwa with a total of 112 enterprises graduating from one level to another. 71 enterprises graduated from micro to small, 26 from small to medium and 15 from medium to large enterprises. These enterprises had a total annual turnover of US\$43 million and were providing employment to a total of 3 063 people.

The Harare Metropolitan Province saw 166 MSMEs graduating in March 2023. A total of 122 MSMEs graduated from micro to small, 38 from small to medium and 6 from medium to large enterprises. The enterprises had a total annual turnover of over US\$35 million and were providing employment to 2 040 people. A total of 17 MSMEs were awarded special awards for exceptional performance.

The Manicaland Province saw 113 MSMEs graduating with 89 from micro to small, 17 from small to medium and 7 from medium to large scale enterprises. The enterprises were in sectors that include animal

husbandry, fisheries, metal fabrication, tourism and hospitality, dairy and timber processing among others. The enterprises had a total annual turnover of US\$42 million and provided employment to 2 052 people.

The major outcomes of the graduation programme include the following: recognition of the role and contribution of MSMEs in the growth of the economy; improved access to markets by MSMEs; and increased MSMEs contribution to fiscal revenue as more enterprises are coming forward to pay taxes. Thus the Government will continue to support the programme in order to accelerate the movement of more micro enterprises from informal to formal and enhance productivity and competitiveness in the sector as we demonstrate that Nyika Inovakwa Nevene Vayo/Ilizwe Lakhiwa Nabanikazi Balo.

5.0 PRIORITY PROJECTS FOR THE 2ND 100-DAY CYCLE OF 2023

Cabinet received and adopted Priority Projects for Implementation during the Second 100-Day Cycle of 2023, as presented by the Minister of State for Presidential Affairs and Monitoring Implementation of Government Programmes, Honourable Dr. Joram McDonald Gumbo.

A total of 130 projects are ongoing, while 42 are new.

In terms of disaggregation by National Development Strategy 1: 2021-2025 (NDS 1) Thematic Areas, the Infrastructure and Utilities Pillar has the highest number of projects totalling 30, followed by 25 under

Devolution then 17 projects under the Economic Growth and Stability Pillar. Cabinet wishes to highlight that as part of the *leaving no-one and no place behind* thrust, 7 projects are being implemented in Binga District, in support of the marginalized areas development initiatives which were enunciated by His Excellency the President, Cde E.D. Mnangagwa.

Going forward and in order to ensure that the public is kept abreast of developments, respective Ministries will report mid-term progress over the period 11 July to 8 August, 2023. A consolidated end-of-cycle publication will be produced at the end of the 2nd 100-Day Cycle period.

6.0 ADMINISTRATION OF ESTATES (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2023

Cabinet considered and approved the Administration of Estates (Amendment) Bill, 2023, as presented by the Minister of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs, Honourable Ziyambi Ziyambi, as Chairperson of the Cabinet Committee on Legislation.

The public will recall that Cabinet, at its 33rd Meeting held on 15 November 2022, resolved that there was need to establish the Office of the Master of the High Court as an independent body outside the Public Service, with its own governing board. The Administration of Estates (Amendment) Bill therefore provides for the removal of the Office of the Master of the High Court from the Public Service and for the introduction of a Master's Office Board. The Board will be responsible for the

administration, supervision and appointment of persons to the Office of the Master. The Administration of Estates (Amendment) Bill, once enacted into law, will ensure operationalization of the Office of the Master of the High Court outside the Public Service and seamless continued operations. It will also guarantee access to justice for clients of the Master's Office.

7.0 REPORT ON THE HIGH-LEVEL MEETING OF THE UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT SEGMENT: NEW YORK, USA: 23 TO 25 MAY, 2023

Cabinet noted the Report on the High-Level Meeting of the United Nations Economic and Social Council Operational Activities for Development Segment, as presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Honourable Dr Frederick Makamure Shava.

The Segment was held under the theme “*The UN Development System’s role in accelerating the recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at all levels*”. In his keynote address, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade commended the UN Secretary-General, Mr Antonio Guterres for introducing and spearheading the reform and working methods of the United Nations since 2019, as well as the excellent partnership between the Government and the United Nations, under the auspices of the 2022-2026 Zimbabwe UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework

(ZUNSDCF). The Minister also emphasized that the illegal sanctions on Zimbabwe by some western UN member States continued to undermine national development efforts, including implementation of SDGs.

Meanwhile, the UN Secretary-General, in his report on the implementation of the 2020 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review, highlighted that the UN Resident Coordinator system is the anchor for all efforts in supporting countries to fight poverty, hunger, climate change and other crises. Member States should therefore step-up efforts to cover the US\$85 million shortfall for the Resident Coordinator system. The Joint SDG Fund was also far short of the Funding Compact target of US\$290 million. The European Union committed to contributing towards funding for the UN Resident Coordinator System under a new funding model to be launched by the UN Secretary-General.

On their part, developing countries expressed concern over the reduction in finance options available for development and the fact that the limited available funding was channelled towards non-development programmes. The countries also stressed the need for UN entities to reduce competition amongst themselves and, instead, promote and harness the benefits of collaboration.

Another key highlight was the meeting of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade held with the UN Secretary-General, Mr Antonio Guterres. The Secretary-General assured the Minister that the United Nations would continue to call for the unconditional removal of sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe. Other issues discussed included the strides

Zimbabwe is making towards achieving sustainable food security; initiatives the country is taking to ensure energy self-sufficiency; and His Excellency the President, the ruling ZANU PF Party and Government's commitment to holding free and fair elections.

The High-Level Meeting of the United Nations Economic and Social Council Operational Activities for Development Segment and the Meeting with the UN Secretary-General provided opportunity for Zimbabwe to further strengthen its excellent partnership with the UN.

8.0 REPORT ON THE 22ND COMESA HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT SUMMIT: LUSAKA, ZAMBIA: 8TH JUNE, 2023

The Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade presented the Report on the 22nd COMESA Heads of State and Government Summit held in Lusaka, Zambia on the 8th of June, 2023. Cabinet noted the Report.

The Summit was held under the theme “*Economic Integration for a Thriving COMESA Anchored on Green Investment, Value Addition and Tourism*”. Highlights of the Summit included the following:

1. Handover of the COMESA Authority Chairmanship from the President of Arab Republic of Egypt to the President of the Republic of Zambia;
2. Assumption of the Vice Chairmanship of the COMESA Authority by Burundi, which would host the 24th Summit Heads of State and Government in 2024;

3. Approval of the extension of contracts for the COMESA Secretary-General and his Assistant for Finance and Administration by a further five-year term;
4. that Zimbabwe is up-to-date with its COMESA obligations;
5. Summit hailed the peaceful elections held in Kenya, Somalia and Tunisia, while noting the Democratic Republic of Congo, Zimbabwe and Madagascar will hold their elections this year; and
6. Summit urged Member States to consolidate the market around COMESA, SADC and the East African Community within the Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA).

9.0 RECORD TOBACCO OUTPUT

Cabinet is pleased to advise that Zimbabwe has recorded the highest tobacco production in its 198 years of history. The Minister of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development, Honourable Dr. Anxious Jongwe Masuka, reported that the country's tobacco output in the ongoing 2023 marketing season currently stands at 261 million kilogrammes, surpassing the previous record of 259 million kilogrammes. This is on the backdrop of the fact that 85% of the tobacco is being produced by smallholder farmers, 60% of whom are beneficiaries of the Land Reform Programme, demonstrating that Government policies in the agriculture sector are sound and continue to bear fruit.

10.0 COMMISSIONING OF THE CHIVHU DAM

In another remarkable achievement which buttresses Government's thrust of "*nyika inovakwa nevene vayo*", the Minister of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development announced that His Excellency the President, Cde E.D. Mnangagwa will tomorrow, the 15th of June 2023, commission the Chivhu Dam. The Dam, another demonstration of the 2nd Republic's drive towards infrastructural development in all areas, will ensure adequate water supplies for reticulation, irrigation, tourism and other activities, thereby significantly boosting the Chivhu local economy.

11.0 GREAT ZIMBABWE UNIVERSITY WINS CONTINENTAL MOOT COURT COMPETITIONS

Cabinet advises the nation, with satisfaction, that the Great Zimbabwe University's Moot Team will, next month, represent Africa at the 15th Nelson Mandela Human Rights Moot Court Competition World Finals to be held at the United Nations Headquarters in Geneva. The Minister of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development informed Cabinet that the GZU Team had won the right to represent the continent after defeating highly-ranked universities from across the continent.

Government takes this opportunity to congratulate the GZU team on this achievement and to wish the team well in the world tourney.

I THANK YOU!

