



**ADDRESS**

**BY**

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

**AT**

**THE BURIAL OF NATIONAL HEROES,  
CDE AMBASSADOR JOHANNE TOMANA AND  
BRIG. GEN. (RTD) MILTON B. SIZIBA AND  
THE FORTY-THIRD HEROES DAY COMMEMORATIONS**

**NATIONAL HEROES ACRE**

**14<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2023**



**THE PRESIDENT AND  
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ZIMBABWE  
DEFENCE FORCES, HIS EXCELLENCY,  
COMRADE EMMERSON DAMBUDZO MNANGAGWA.**

Director of Ceremonies, Minister of Home Affairs and  
Cultural Heritage, Hon. K. Kazembe;

Bereaved Amai D. Tomana and the Tomana Family;

Bereaved Amai N. Siziba and the Siziba Family;

The First Lady, Amai A. Mnangagwa;

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

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

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

Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon. Advocate J.  
F. Mudenda;

President of Senate, Hon. Amai M. M. Chinomona;

The Chief Justice, Hon. L. Malaba;

Members of the Politburo and Central Committee;

Honourable Ministers;

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

Chairperson of the Public Service Commission,  
Dr. V. Hungwe;

Commander Defence Forces, Gen. P. V. Sibanda;

Service Chiefs;

Deputy Commissioner-General S. T. Shaalulange,  
Namibian Correctional Service and delegation;

President of the Chief's Council, Hon. Sen. M.  
Khumalo;

Esteemed Traditional Leaders;

His Worship the Mayor of Harare, Councillor J.  
Mafume;

Families of our Heroes and Heroines, here represented;

War Veterans, Collaborators, Ex-Detainees and  
Restrictees;

Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

Leaders of Opposition Parties and Members of the  
Political Actors Dialogue;

Fellow Zimbabweans, including those in the Diaspora;  
Comrades and Friends.

Today is a unique and solemn occasion in the history of our country. On one hand we are commemorating the 43<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of our National Heroes Day. On the other, we are laying to rest gallant sons of Zimbabwe, distinguished patriots and dedicated cadres, who contributed immensely to our nation's history. The late Ambassador Advocate Johanne Tomana played an indelible part in the transformative justice system of the country, while the late Brigadier General (Rtd) Milton Bekithemba Siziba served as a commander in our war of liberation, within the Zimbabwe Defence Forces and the Zimbabwe Prisons and Correctional Service.

Cde Johanne Tomana passed on, on the 6<sup>th</sup> of August, 2023, at his rural home in Honde Valley, after a short illness. He was 56. His passing on, is another huge blow to our nation, especially in the diplomatic and legal fraternity. We grieve over this sad loss.

On behalf of the Government, our Party ZANU PF, our Nation, my family and indeed on my own behalf, I wish to express my sincere condolences to Mrs Dephine Tomana, the children and broader family for this sad loss. The late Ambassador Johanne Tomana who was your son, had a distinguished career as a legal practitioner, Deputy Attorney-General (2006), Attorney-General (2008) and as the country's first Prosecutor-General.

Our late National Hero played a critical role in shaping the country's legal ethos and the prosecutorial system. Cde Tomana's redeployment to the Democratic Republic of Congo as Ambassador saw him advance Zimbabwe's Engagement and Re-Engagement Policy with singleness of purpose. May you take comfort from the knowledge that your loss is felt by us all.

In the late Cde Tomana, the nation has lost a distinguished, dedicated and loyal Senior Civil Servant and lawyer. Unlike some in the legal fraternity that seek to use the law to confirm the impossible, he

did not believe in the use of law for advancement of neo-liberal values. Our late National Hero was a progressive lawyer who saw law as an instrument of social transformation. He also advanced Zimbabwe's interests on the international stage as Ambassador to the Democratic Republic of Congo.

**Fellow Zimbabweans;**

I equally express my heartfelt condolences to Amai Noshipo Siziba and the Siziba family on the passing on of the late Brigadier General (Rtd) Milton Bekithemba Siziba who passed on, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of August, 2023.

The late National Hero, Brigadier General Siziba, whose Chimurenga name was Cde Jefray Machinga, was born on 14 November, 1951, in Matabeleland South Province. He did his primary and secondary education in Matobo District.

As with most of the youth of his time, he could not accept life under the brutal, racist colonial regime and proceeded to join the liberation struggle in Zambia.

After completing his basic military training in 1977, he was selected to undergo officer cadet training at Kohima Barracks. This was to prepare him for command and other duties in the prosecution of our armed struggle.

Upon completion of training, he served as a Detachment Commander and later Chief of Personnel in ZIPRA. He was later re-assigned to Bahema Camp and given the special assignment of training regular military units.

At Independence in 1980, the late National Hero was attested into the Zimbabwe National Army. He held several appointments in command and support services and rose through the ranks to become Brigadier General in 2002.

During his service in the Army, the General Officer attended and completed various courses which were commensurate with his rank. He was accorded several awards and medals, including the Grand Commander of the Zimbabwe Order of Merit for his eminent achievements and distinguished service.

## **Fellow Citizens;**

It is most befitting that these cadres are being interred on this sacred day when we remember our Heroes under the theme; **“Remembering our Heroes; Nyika inovakwa nevene vayo, ilizwe lakhiwa ngabanikazi balo.”**

This year’s commemorations and the interment of our gallant National Heroes are being held only nine days before our country goes to the Harmonised General Elections.

I congratulate all the people of Zimbabwe for an unprecedented peaceful and tranquil election season. **Makorokoto Zimbabwe. Amhlophe Zimbabwe. Congratulations.** This is the unity, peace, and harmony that the heroes we are remembering today, including the late Cde Tomana and Cde Siziba would have wanted.

Our heroes fought for our independence, sovereignty and freedom as a united people. They knew no tribe, region and no clan or totem. In their honour, let us

recognise that the right to vote and ideals of democracy, universal suffrage and human rights did not come on a silver platter.

The obligation is on us, individually and collectively to say No to violence; No to tribalism, No to regionalism, hate speech and all other divisive tendencies. Under ZANU PF, democratic practices, constitutionalism, good governance and the rule of law are being entrenched. The late Cde Tomana and Cde Siziba played their part in this regard.

### **Comrades and Friends;**

Our late National Hero, Ambassador Johanne Tomana was born on 9<sup>th</sup> September, 1967, in Mutasa District in Manicaland Province. He grew up in rural colonial Rhodesia. He attended various primary schools in Manicaland and Mashonaland West before enrolling for secondary education at St Augustine Mission in Penhalonga.

He successfully completed his Ordinary and Advanced levels in 1985 and 1987, respectively, following which

he proceeded to study for a Bachelor of Laws Honours Degree between 1988 and 1992 at the University of Zimbabwe.

The late Advocate Tomana successfully registered as a Legal Practitioner in March 1993. Thereafter, he studied and completed a Masters Degree in International Law with a Swedish University in 1994.

The late Advocate Tomana practised as a lawyer in various law firms including as a Partner with Muzangaza, Mandaza and Tomana Legal Practitioners. He served as a Commissioner with the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission from September 2005 to December 2007.

Advocate Tomana was appointed Deputy Attorney-General responsible for Crime, a position which he served with diligence between 2007 and 2008. He was then promoted to Attorney-General at the end of 2008 and served up to the end of 2013, when he subsequently became the Prosecutor-General.

With the advent of the Second Republic, he was appointed Ambassador to the Democratic Republic of Congo, where he pushed forward the national agenda of Engagement and Re-Engagement.

Similarly, the late National Hero, Brigadier General (Rtd) Siziba served as a Defence attaché to the Republic of South Africa where he represented his country with honour and distinction.

On retirement, the late National Hero availed himself for national duty and joined the Zimbabwe Prisons and Correctional Service as a Deputy Commissioner-General responsible for Operations, Security, Personnel and Training. During his time at the ZPCS, he was instrumental in the transformation and modernisation of the organisation.

Upon his retirement in 2006, he was appointed as Commissioner of the Zimbabwe Prisons and Correctional Service Commission, a position he held until his passing on. We shall forever cherish the

legacy of the late military and correctional officer who remained focused and steadfast in his service to our great motherland, Zimbabwe.

### **Comrades and Friends;**

In honour of the aspirations and hopes of our fallen heroes who never lived to see a free and independent Zimbabwe, the Second Republic is uplifting the standards of living of every Zimbabwean; no one and no place is being left behind. All the people of our motherland are of equal importance.

Under our mass revolutionary Party, ZANU PF, we remain a Government of the people, by the people and for the people. Zimbabwe will never, ever be run by a puppet Government of our erstwhile oppressors. Never!

This is a position that the national heroes we are interring today, Cde Tomana and Cde Siziba un-apologetically associated with. In the same spirit, the heroes and heroines we are honouring today played their part and

left us a legacy of resilience and unflinching patriotism. Some waged the 16-year protracted war of liberation until an independent and free Zimbabwe was birthed.

Twenty-three years after the ruinous sanctions imposed by some Western countries, our country continues to defy all odds. We are transforming our infrastructure as well as industrialising and modernising our economy. This must never be taken lightly. **Makorokoto; Amhlophe** people of Zimbabwe; you are all heroes in this ongoing battle against the neo-imperialistic vultures, who without shame, hover over our country's resources. Victory is in our DNA.

In whatever field, sector or profession, as the people of Zimbabwe, be it here at home or in the diaspora, let us avail ourselves, professional skills and capabilities for the national good. This was a recurring trait of our country's heroes and heroines.

They fought for the establishment of a people-oriented, democratic, just and fair constitutional order, among other aspirations. Throughout their respective journeys

and service to our country, they remained consistent and persistent. Let us take a leaf from their traits of true patriotism, and serve as honest, humble, hard working and trustworthy cadres.

### **Fellow Mourners and Countrymen;**

Our departed National Heroes, Cde Tomana and Brigadier General (Rtd) Siziba were farmers in their own right. The late Cde Tomana offered legal advice, particularly during the initial stages of the Land Reform Programme.

As we lay them to rest, we celebrate that the land our heroes fought for is now productive and will forever remain united with the people. The Land Reform is irreversible and behind us. The ZANU PF Government has seen our country realise household and national food security and sovereignty.

It is a befitting honour to the departed heroes that, collectively, our farmers produced an unprecedented 375 131 metric tonnes from the 2022 Winter Wheat

Programme, being the highest produced since 1962, when wheat was first grown in this country.

Maize output for the 2022/23 season exceeded 2 million metric tonnes. This, coupled with the current expected yields for winter wheat, will usher Zimbabwe as a net exporter of these strategic crops. **Makorokoto, Amhlophe, Congratulations.**

Similarly, production levels of tobacco are record breaking at 291 million kgs. The livestock sector has been resuscitated while more of our farmers are undertaking farming as a business and diversifying into export and agro-value chains.

I want to assure our nation that preparations for the 2023/2024 farming season have commenced earlier than usual, with inputs under the **Pfumvudza/Intwasa** Climate Proofed Agriculture Programme, now available at the various GMB depots. Mechanisation equipment under this programme will also be availed to our farmers. Across all our communities, let us work harder

and continue preaching production and productivity. Government, under ZANU PF, will continue to support you all.

Villagers across the country endured the war of liberation and we are determined to accelerate development programmes that improve their quality of life. Indeed, these everyday heroes bore the brunt of the liberation struggle and deserve the honour and dignity of being lifted out of poverty and into prosperity.

### **Fellow Countrymen and Women;**

Our heroes fought for our land and all that which is beneath our land. Under the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic, our mining sector has experienced exponential growth with a new range of minerals being exploited. Zimbabwe is on course to surpass the US\$12 billion target by year end.

In the energy and power sub-sector, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic has delivered. Hwange Unit 7 and 8 is now feeding 635 megawatts onto the national grid. Everyone is now enjoying the benefits of improved power supply.

Zimbabwe is a scenic, hospitable and welcoming nation. We must protect our tourism sector and be more vigilant against the ever-growing menace of veldt fires.

### **Comrades and Friends;**

The heroes of the First and Second Chimurenga fought in a bloody war in battlefields and delivered the freedom and independence we are enjoying. To leap-frog our country to the next level of development, the onus is on the current generation of our young boys and girls. They are challenged to ride on Science, Technology, Innovation and Entrepreneurship being advanced by my Government and Heritage Based Education 5.0 to realise their full potential as we build our country.

Drawing from the lessons from the heroes we are celebrating today, the young people of Zimbabwe are called upon to be bold, daring and innovative by breaking new ground in science, technology and the industrialisation of our motherland, Zimbabwe. **Vakayi nyika yedu. Yakhani ilizwe lethu.**

The opening up of the media sector and resultant increased access to information come with increased

responsibilities and obligations. Our late National Hero, Cde Tomana, was passionate about a media which advances the national interests.

In his honour, I exhort the fraternity to use the media, arts, sports and creative industry to promote and protect our Zimbabwean identity, values and African culture as well as our Christian oriented family traditions and norms. The media must never be divisive or used to promote self-hate in our nation.

On his part, the late National Hero Cde Siziba's service in the Zimbabwe Defence Forces played a role in ensuring that the ZDF continues to be a professional and elite force.

Tomorrow, we will be honouring our military as we commemorate their 43<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary as our country's strategic institution.

Further, his prowess and versatility in training and development saw the capacitation of a new correctional service cadre capable of rehabilitating offenders in a modern criminal justice system.

Taking a cue from both departed National Heroes, a new patriotic, dedicated, loyal and hard-working civil service corps must be nurtured to wholeheartedly serve the people of our great country. New heroes within the public service and across the entire economy must arise. Every job is important and will contribute to the realisation of our Vision 2030.

The Second Republic is making notable strides to improve the welfare of Veterans of the Liberation Struggle, including their dependents. In this regard, the Heroes Dependents Board is seized with the task of ensuring that the required educational, vocational and medical costs are attended to without undue delays.

The increased investments as well as the participation and involvement of our country within the comity of nations, stand as a testimony of the success of our Engagement and Re-engagement Policy. Zimbabwe will continue to be “a friend to all and an enemy to none”.

## **Fellow Zimbabweans;**

The Second Republic recognises the role played by our nation's sons and daughters across all social, political and economic fields. Today, we shall witness the second Honours and Awards Ceremony.

These awards were informed by the deliberate decision by my Government to honour inspirational role models, personalities and organisations, who render invaluable service to our people and place Zimbabwe on the map.

To further immortalise the works of the various recipients, a Hall of Fame will be established as part of the Government Complex at the New City, in Mt. Hampden.

In conclusion, I once again commend the people of Zimbabwe for the peace, unity, love, tolerance and harmony we are exhibiting across all corners of our great country. This 43<sup>rd</sup> National Heroes Day should embolden us all, fellow Zimbabweans, to carry forward the good work started by our forebears whose exemplary patriotism and loyalty to our country shall forever remain a beacon of fortitude.

As we also inter the late Cde Johanne Tomana and Brigadier General (Rtd) Milton Bekithemba Siziba, alongside other heroes and luminaries of our great country at this National Shrine, for remembrance and eternal reverence; I say to them:

**Fambai zvakanaka vana vevhu. Hambani kuhle bantwana bomhlabathi;**

Go well gallant Sons of the Soil. **Zororai Murugare magamba edu. Lalani Ngokuthula maqhawe amaqhawe;**

Rest in Eternal Peace our dear Comrades and national heroes. We shall continue to work hard to defend and prosper what you sacrificed your lives for.

With these remarks, I wish the people of our great motherland, Zimbabwe, a peaceful 43<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of our National Heroes Day.

**God bless you all.**

**God bless Zimbabwe.**

**I thank you.**