



ADDRESS

BY

THE PRESIDENT AND

**COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ZIMBABWE
DEFENCE FORCES**

HIS EXCELLENCY, DR. E. D. MNANGAGWA

AT THE

**OCCASION OF THE 43rd ANNIVERSARY OF
THE ZIMBABWE DEFENCE FORCES DAY
CELEBRATIONS**

NATIONAL SPORTS STADIUM

15TH AUGUST, 2023



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

The First Lady, Amai Dr. A. Mnangagwa;

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

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

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

Speaker of the House of Assembly, Hon. J. F. N.
Mudenda;

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

Chief Justice, Hon. Justice L. Malaba;

Members of the Politburo and Central Committee;

Cabinet Ministers;

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

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

Commander Zimbabwe Defence Forces, General P. V.
Sibanda;

Service Chiefs;

Our Traditional Leaders;

Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

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

Head of Delegation of the Malawian Defence Forces
Soccer Team Maj. General G. A. Jaffu Jnr. and
Your Esteemed Delegation;

Invited Guests;

Comrades and Friends.

We are gathered here once again to celebrate yet another year of excellence by the Zimbabwe Defence Forces (ZDF), in the execution of their mandate of safeguarding our independence, national sovereignty, territorial integrity, national interests as well as rich liberation and cultural heritage.

The theme of this year's celebrations, **“Zimbabwe Defence Forces: Creating a Conducive Environment for the Achievement of Vision 2030”** is in recognition of the importance of a peaceful and tranquil environment for sustainable development. In this regard, the Zimbabwe Defence Forces remains a vital cog in the ongoing national socio-economic modernisation and development of our great motherland, Zimbabwe.

Since its creation, the ZDF has always been a “People’s Force”, which has effectively defended our beloved country and has guaranteed our nationhood, in the face of adversity and aggression from detractors.

The ZDF’s priority and principal vision is transformation through modernisation in such areas as training and manpower development, among others.

Over the years, the Defence Forces have progressively transformed into a dependable, agile, hard-hitting force, capable of containing any threat. This has been realised

through robust, relevant and responsive training as well as personnel development programmes. Further, it is commendable that the ZDF has maintained sound and coordinated working relations with other security agencies for the notable successes recorded in the sphere of civil-military relations.

In addition, our Defence Forces are playing their part towards sustainable regional and international peace and security. I, therefore, applaud you, the Officers, men and women of our Zimbabwe Defence Forces, for your high levels of professionalism, discipline, diligence and defence capabilities which have made these characteristics synonymous with our country's military.

The Zimbabwe National Defence University has now opened its doors to civilian students. The faculties and disciplines offered by the University have equally been broadened, in line with current skills gaps and priorities, with a bias towards Engineering and Aviation Programmes.

Meanwhile, the University has also introduced a degree programme in Disaster Management to enhance knowledge and national capacity in disaster response, mitigation and recovery. In line with the Heritage-Based Education 5.0 model, the Zimbabwe National Defence University is being capacitated to play its part in championing the industrialisation and modernisation of Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe is a unitary state and I congratulate the Zimbabwe Defence Forces for ensuring geographical and gender equity in its recruitment policy. The high quality of education being availed at ZDF schools is applauded for facilitating both our male and female children to have equal opportunities in line with their talents, dreams and potential.

The various flagship training institutions of the ZDF have, over the years taken on board external students. This has in-turn strengthened relations between the ZDF and friendly forces while consolidating cooperation, within the framework of Zimbabwe's Foreign Policy.

As such, the ZDF is benefitting from training exchange programmes with countries in the SADC region and beyond. Far afield, I thank the Governments of the People's Republic of China, the Russian Federation, India, Pakistan, Indonesia and Malaysia for enriching partnerships with regards to the training needs of the Zimbabwe Defence Forces. Our country is grateful for this cooperation and stands ready to play its part towards advancing global peace and security.

In that context, a total of thirty-six ZDF officers are deployed to United Nations Missions, while others are deployed under the auspices of the African Union.

As a member of the African Union Peace and Security Council, Zimbabwe is also contributing to ongoing initiatives in search of lasting solutions to instability, threats of terrorism and violent extremism on our African Continent, in the spirit of **“African solutions to African problems”**.

Our country condemns wanton Western aggression and opposes the use of sanctions as a foreign policy tool under the notion ‘might is right’. We continue to call for a global system based on the principles of the United Nations Charter and equality of nations under a multi-polar global system.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

The security of our beloved motherland, Zimbabwe, as well as the unflinching patriotism, loyalty and strategic capabilities of our security sector, and the Zimbabwe Defence Forces in particular, remain the cornerstone of the preservation of our independence, unity, peace, stability and sustainable development.

As Commander in Chief of the Zimbabwe Defence Forces I have, therefore, made a deliberate decision to heighten the pace of the modernisation and capacitation of our Forces. A broad array of monetary and non-monetary incentives have been extended to members of the ZDF.

Additionally, the transport needs of our Defence Forces are being attended to following the ongoing procurement of an assortment of vehicles, including over 200 buses. The acquisition of versatile troop carrying and modern fighting vehicles, among other operational vehicles, is set to further enhance organisational mobility within the ZDF.

To improve accommodation facilities for ZDF personnel, Government is implementing various projects such as the Dzivarasekwa and Khumalo Housing Projects. Other housing units are being constructed at Imbizo and Jason Ziyaphapha Moyo Air Force Base.

To date, the Dzivarasekwa Housing Project has 201 completed housing units and others at different stages of completion. The Imbizo Institutional Housing Project has 44 units at different stages of completion and an additional 30 units scheduled to be completed by year end.

To accelerate the completion of targeted units, my Government has contracted Private Companies to construct a total of 260 blocks of flats.

The health needs of members of the ZDF remain a priority area. In this regard, the completion of the Manyame Referral Hospital is being accelerated in our quest to ensure that specialist medical services are available to our Defence Forces.

As a People's Force, I commend the ZDF Health Services Department for the free health services which continue to be availed to disadvantaged communities.

Similarly, the Construction Regiment has deployed artisans to various Ministries and Departments in infrastructure development projects. These include the construction of school blocks and clinics within various rural communities across all provinces.

By so doing, the ZDF is living up to our national development philosophy, **Nyika inovakwa nevene vayo. Ilizwe lakhiwa ngabanikazi balo.** Makorokoto, Amhlophe. Congratulations.

Fellow Citizens, Ladies and Gentlemen;

Landmines and other explosive remnants of the liberation war along our borders, continue to pose a threat to human and animal life. Further, the landmines are an impediment to the full access and utilisation of our land by affected communities. Demining operations are taking place in all the affected areas along our country's borders with Mozambique and Zambia, covering Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland East, Manicaland and Masvingo Provinces. We remain determined to realise a landmine-free Zimbabwe by 2025.

The Second Republic took a deliberate decision to honour all the heroes who contributed during the different periods of our liberation struggle. Additionally,

my Government is improving the welfare of the Veterans of the Liberation Struggle, their dependants, and those of departed Heroes and Heroines.

To expedite the operationalisation of the National Heroes Act, a five member Heroes Dependants Assistance Board has since been appointed. As they discharge their functions and conduct a nationwide registration exercise for all dependants of Heroes and Heroines, no one and no place will be left behind.

My Government, through the Veterans of the Liberation Struggle Act, has recognised the non-Combatant Cadres and War Collaborators as veterans of the Liberation Struggle. To this end, non-Combatant Cadres and War Collaborators were successfully vetted. Earlier, this morning, some of these cadres, received Independence Medals while others are receiving their medals at provincial centres countrywide.

In terms of the utilisation of agricultural land, my Government is gravely concerned with the challenges faced by surviving dependants of Heroes/Heroines. I, therefore, direct that the Ministry of Defence and War Veterans Affairs, in conjunction with the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development, concertedly address this challenge.

Land is the very resource that veterans of the liberation struggle sacrificed their lives for. All those engaged in such malpractices stand warned and must desist from these tendencies forthwith.

In conclusion, I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to you all, officers, men and women of the Zimbabwe Defence Forces for your selfless service to our great motherland, Zimbabwe. Today, we honour and salute you. Thank you for coming out in your numbers to grace these commemorations.

I wish you and your families a Happy 43rd Zimbabwe National Defence Forces Day celebrations.

Long live our Defence Forces.

Long Live Zimbabwe.

*Long Live our Peace, Unity, Freedom and
Sovereignty.*

God bless us all.

God bless Zimbabwe.

I thank you.

