



SPEECH

BY

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

AT

**THE COMMISSIONING OF THE
CHAMPION FOODS PRIVATE LIMITED
MILLING PLANT**

TYNWALD, HARARE

27 MARCH 2024

Director of Ceremonies;

Vice President, Hon. Gen. (Rtd) Dr. C. G. D. N. Chiwenga;

Vice President, Hon. Col. (Rtd) K. C. D. Mohadi;

Minister of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development, Hon. Dr. A. J. Masuka;

Minister of State for Harare Metropolitan Province, Hon. C. Z. Tavengwa;

Other Honourable Ministers here present;

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

Senior Government Officials here present;

Chairperson of Champion Foods Private Limited, Mr. D. C. Kwande and Staff;

Representatives from the Private Sector here present;

Representatives of Farmer Unions and Farmers here present;

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Comrades and Friends.

It is my honour and pleasure to be gracing this occasion as we witness the official opening of the Champion Foods Private Limited Milling Plant, here in Tynwald, Harare. This highlights the commitment and motivation by the investor to take up opportunities which our economy has to offer, while providing a critical service to the nation.

The plant, which has a milling capacity of 500 tonnes of maize meal and 200 tonnes of wheat per day, is one of the various initiatives being implemented by private sector players as a means to revolutionise, transform and take the agriculture sector forward.

In this regard, please join me in celebrating the bold decision and steps being taken by private sector players, including Champion Foods Private Limited Company, towards industrialising and modernising our economy for the attainment of Vision 2030.

I congratulate Champion Foods Private Limited for the entrepreneurial initiative, as well as great milestones realised at this site. **Makorokoto, Amhlophe.** The contributions you are set to make in the agricultural value addition space are welcome. To this end, the massive milling plant will help complement the current local milling capacity, increase our product volumes, create employment opportunities and export-led production.

Allow me to also commend the determination, focus, professional workmanship, collaboration and teamwork exhibited by the teams who showed urgency, sufficient knowledge and proficiency in installing the milling plant. Today, we thus, give full testimony that “what appeared impossible, now is possible”.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

The importance of agriculture as the engine for Zimbabwe’s sustainable economic development cannot be overemphasised. As you are aware, over 70% of

livelihoods are directly and indirectly linked to the agriculture sector.

The sector presents great potential to leapfrog the economy, given its capacity to influence the development of various services such as manufacturing financing, insurance, and logistics, among others. I challenge our communities, young people and entrepreneurs, to take advantage of the opportunities that these critical services have to offer.

My Government will continue to foster a conducive operating environment to accelerate rural industrialisation, modernisation and growth of our economy.

Agriculture transformation and food self-sufficiency remain our top priority. We are a nation capable to produce and feed ourself. Hence, in the ongoing transformation journey, all the necessary support shall be rendered so that the sector's contribution to the overall

growth of the economy will continue to surpass yesterday's records.

This includes sustained support for the various agriculture production facilities as well as investments in the construction of more dams, adoption of agriculture smart technologies and increased irrigation capacity.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

As you may be aware, value-addition provides an important entry point for business development and support, increased income, improved food safety, food security, nutritional benefits and greater consumer confidence.

The investment by Champion Foods, is one of the ways the private sector is playing its part in growing our economy. Through initiatives such as this one, my Government is ensuring the building of stronger and productive communities, which guarantees that we lift many of our people out of poverty into prosperity.

By investing in value-added initiatives, we are ensuring the collective well-being of our societies, skills development among the youth and broader community participation. This further brings about greater social harmony and cohesion at community level while providing a better quality of life for all and sustainable livelihoods.

Meanwhile, to further propel agriculture sector transformation, my Government will continue to invest in research, science, technology and innovation at the primary, secondary and higher education level. By equipping our youth with the requisite skills and knowledge we are providing them with better tools for their future.

I urge stakeholders in the agriculture and education sector to develop synergies and collaborations for bolstering our technical, vocational and entrepreneurial education ecosystem. This is more critical as an ever-expanding industrial base require a versatile human

resource base of technicians and artisans among other competencies.

As we scale up our efforts towards value addition and the attainment of Vision 2030, public and private institutions, as well as farmers are called upon to continue working together towards ensuring coordinated and increased production, marketing and financing of the agriculture sector. On its part, my Administration remains committed to supporting initiatives and investments to improve our agriculture sector, mitigate against climate change, end hunger and poverty.

Furthermore, we are committed to continue playing our part towards the realisation of aspirations outlined in the National Development Strategy, African Union Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme and United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals.

Given the effects of the El-Nino induced drought, the Second Republic is ensuring that no one will starve. Our comprehensive drought relief and food deficit mitigation programme is already underway.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Allow me once again to appreciate and commend the great work exhibited by Champion Foods Private Limited in establishing this milling complex. Success is always achieved by those whose eyes remain focused on the “ball”. Today we give testimony that together we are building our great motherland, Zimbabwe, brick by brick, stone upon stone, leaving no one and no place behind.

I invite other players to set up more value addition centres across the country, while also supporting increased production and productivity enough to sustain the investment. That way we achieve sustainable localised “rural” agricultural-linked economic development. Indeed, **“Nyika inovakwa, inotongwa,**

inonamatigwa nevene vayo / ilizwe lakhiwa, libuswe, likhulekelwe ngabanikazi balo”.

In conclusion, my Government will continue fostering the conducive business operating environment by implementing policies and measures that guarantee positive returns for investors.

With these remarks, it is now my pleasure and honour to declare Champion Foods Private Limited Company Milling Plant, officially commissioned. I wish you all an exciting and productive journey.

God bless you.

God bless Zimbabwe.

I thank you.