



**ZIMBABWE**

**44<sup>TH</sup> INDEPENDENCE DAY SPEECH**

**BY**

**THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC**

**OF ZIMBABWE, HIS EXCELLENCY,**

**CDE. DR. E. D. MNANGAGWA**

**MURAMBINDA**

**MANICALAND PROVINCE**

**18<sup>TH</sup> APRIL, 2024**



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

Director of Ceremonies and Minister of Local Government and Public Works, Hon. W. Chitando and Minister of Information, Publicity and Broadcasting Services; Hon. J. Muswere;

The First Lady, Amai Auxillia Mnangagwa;

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

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

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

Minister of State for Provincial Affairs and Devolution, Manicaland Province, Hon. Adv. M. Mugadza;

Members of the ZANU PF Central Committee and Politburo;

Speaker of Parliament, Hon. Adv. J. F. N. Mudenda;

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

The Chief Justice, Hon. L. Malaba;

Leaders of other Political Parties;

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

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

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

Chief Nyashanu, Muhera, and all the Traditional  
Leaders;

Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic  
Corps;

Senior Government Officials;

Service Chiefs;

Veterans of the Liberation Struggle;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Comrades and Friends;

Fellow Countrymen and Women.

Today, we mark another milestone in the history of our great nation of Zimbabwe as we celebrate our 44<sup>th</sup> Independence Anniversary.

On this day, the sacred national flag of our beloved motherland, Zimbabwe was raised, and the Union Jack brought down, symbolising the end to the racist and brutal colonial rule.

We asserted our independence, freedom and sovereignty as the rightful owners and rulers of this great land. Never, never, never again shall we be ruled by a foreign people, in whatever pretext.

I say to all fellow citizens here, at home and in the diaspora, Congratulations.

**Ndinoti kuruzhinji rwe Zimbabwe,  
Makorokoto, Makorokoto;**

**Sithi Amhlophe, Amhlophe, Zimbabwe.**

We gather in this scenic province of Manicaland, with its cascading mountains and valleys, which was the ground of many battles fought during the protracted war of liberation. We respectfully salute the heroes and heroines of our struggle.

We honour the liberation icons of this province such as the late National Heroes, Cde Ndabaningi Sithole, Cde Herbert Wiltshire Chitepo, Chief Reikai Tangwena, Cde Edgar “Two Boy” Tekere, Cde Maurice Nyagumbo, Cde William Ndangana, Cde Kumbirai Kangai and others, alongside the many known and unknown sons and daughters of the soil, from across the country. They all fought,

suffered and sacrificed their lives to win this independence and freedom for us. **Tinovatenda. Siya-ba-bonga.** We shall forever be grateful. We shall never forget.

**Nhasi tirikuno kumakomo, kuBuhera District, Manicaland Province.** This follows the decision by the Second Republic to rotate the National Independence Day Commemorations.

Our gathering here must, therefore, serve as a reminder that despite our differences in language, culture and traditions; despite of where we live in the four corners of Zimbabwe, we are one people; one unitary and united nation; with one rich and illustrious history.

**Tiri Nyika imwe chete; Tiri vanhu vamwe-chete.**

**Si-yi-lizwe linye; Singa-bantu-banye.**

We remain united, living in peace and harmony, developing our country, emboldened by our philosophy that; **“Nyika inovakwa, inotongwa, inonamatirwa nevene vayo. Ilizwe lakhiwa, libuswe, *likhu-le-kelwe* ngabanikazi balo”**.

We are boldly building, governing and praying for our country, brick by brick, stone upon stone and step by step.

### **Fellow Zimbabweans;**

Manicaland Province will always be remembered as one of the many Provinces in the country that bore the brunt of the Liberation Struggle which ushered us into the independence and freedom which we all enjoy today. The proximity of the Province to Mozambique saw many communities suffering from the indiscriminate racist brutality of the colonial regime. In one accord, today our nation says: “Thank you people of Manicaland Province, thank you for playing your part for our



country's independence.” **Tinotenda Manicaland Province, Siyabonga.**

The historic and landmark Dzapasi/Foxtrot Assembly Point, which was a temporary home of close to 15 000 comrades during the cease fire period is located about 40 kilometres from this venue, some of them are in our midst today.

Such sites, together with the recently unveiled monuments at Pupu in Matabeleland North Province and Kamungoma in Masvingo Province and many others yet to be unveiled, such as Butcher Camp in Makoni and Chibondo in Mt Darwin, remind us of the sacrifices made by heroes and veterans of the liberation struggle. Let us continue to honour them by memorialising our historic sites and correctly documenting our rich liberation war history for both present and future generations.

**Dear Comrades and Friends;**

This year's commemorations, come on the backdrop of the climate change induced El Nino

drought. It is the worst drought in 40 years, which is affecting the entire SADC region. I am aware that many of our communities, including here in Manicaland Province, have been affected by the low rainfall which resulted in poor harvests.

As such, earlier this month, I invoked a nationwide State of Disaster on the Drought to allow our Government machinery and institutions to give special attention to mitigating the negative impact of the drought.

**Tiri hurumende yeruzhinji rwe Zimbabwe. Singu-hulumende wabantu.** The Second Republic, under ZANU PF, is a people-centred Government, committed to wholeheartedly attending to the needs of our communities. In both rural or urban areas, no Zimbabwean will succumb to starvation. Adequate resources are being mobilised towards national food security.

The Food Deficit Mitigation Programme is gathering pace following the identification of vulnerable communities and households in every district and ward. Drawing from our traditional heritage, cultural norms and values, we are tackling drought in unity, no-one and no place will be left behind.

Meanwhile, my Government is implementing a robust winter cropping programme, as we broaden our Strategic Grain Reserves. Furthermore, measures are in place to reactivate winter maize projects in Chiredzi, Muzarabani and Binga.

**Fellow Zimbabweans;**

Government is alive to the adverse impact suffered by our people as a result of currency volatility and inflation. Last week, my Administration launched a new structured gold-backed currency, the Zimbabwe Gold (ZiG). **Nyika yedu irikuenderera mberi. Ilizwe lethu liya phambili.**

Our ZiG currency is anchored by our God given gold and other strategic mineral resources, as well as foreign currency reserves. This development, will boost our confidence and pride in our own national currency and further help protect our currency from attack by the country's detractors.

This is our currency; we all have a duty to support this transformational development. Further, measures to encourage savings and reduce excessive bank fees and charges have also been put in place.

The overall economic outlook remains bright. Our country's GDP is now exceeding US\$47 billion up from US\$16 billion in 2018. This shows that we, the descendants of the Great Munhumutapa are a resilient, focused, determined and hardworking people. Zimbabwe is winning.

In spite of the COVID-19 pandemic, the on-going illegal sanctions, and other shocks, we continue to foster investment-led economic recovery.

A positive growth as a result of investments from both domestic and foreign players, as well as incentives and policies is evident in the mining sector. In the wake of recent discoveries, Zimbabwe is on course to be a player in the oil, gas and petro-chemical industry. The country's lithium mining and processing portfolio is growing, including here in Buhera District. This will see Zimbabwe sustainably exploiting this strategic new energy resource, for the socio-economic development of our people. We are also contributing to addressing the global climate change crisis.

Capacity utilisation levels are constantly increasing in the manufacturing sector. New industries are being opened with more of our young entrepreneurs now confidently producing goods and services for our country and communities. Exports of value-added products increased by 22% in 2023.

A 34% increase in tourism sector arrivals in the 2023 figures has seen the sector exceed the

pre-COVID-19 tourist arrivals. The growth of the sector has been further boosted by increased domestic tourism, as more of our people enjoy Independence by visiting different parts of the country. I commend Zimbabweans for this culture and pride in our local destinations and country as a whole.

The Second Republic continues to streamline border procedures and to modernise infrastructure towards facilitating cross border movement and enhancing regional integration within SADC, the continent and beyond.

Signature infrastructure projects involving key economic enablers in power generation, dam construction, road networks, water and sanitation as well as ICTs continue to improve service delivery, create jobs and transform our socio-economic landscape as we modernise our great motherland, Zimbabwe.

Robust strategies to strengthen our country's energy mix remain ongoing. Works on the fuel pipeline will soon facilitate an increase in annual pumping volumes in response to growing fuel demands.

Following the successful completion of the Beitbridge-Harare highway, focus has now shifted to the Harare-Chirundu section. The broader road rehabilitation and construction projects across our country's provinces will continue to be supported.

The Second Republic is committed to ensuring that Zimbabwe becomes a robust digital economy and knowledge-based society.

This has seen the expansion of the fibre-optic network backbone infrastructure and the adoption of responsive policies and measures to promote access and use of ICTs.

Industry players, are called upon to operate within our country's laws. ICT services and products must

be made more affordable to all our communities, including the education, and economic sectors.

Over the past year, the broadcasting industry has undergone tremendous transformation towards inclusive access to information. Radio signal coverage has been expanded and the number of Community Radio Stations increased. Let us encourage the use of our local languages to preserve our diverse and unique traditions and culture.

Social media platforms must be used responsibly to defend our independence and national pride as well as to educate, maintain unity, harmony and drive production and productivity in all our communities.

**Fellow Zimbabweans;**

The Second Republic is unrelenting in efforts to bring quality healthcare closer to every citizen. The availability of life-saving drugs and specialist



medical health care has tremendously improved. More health facilities will be commissioned before year end throughout the country.

In this age of speedy technological advancements, we must constantly innovate and acquire the requisite knowledge and skills. The roll out of Science, Technology and Innovation as a driver of our national modernisation and industrialisation agenda under the Heritage Based Education 5.0 model, is yielding notable results.

Adding on to the successes realised under this initiative, a deliberate policy is under way to guarantee a seamless Science, Technology and Innovation ecosystem which cuts across Primary, Secondary and Higher Education levels.

The training of teachers on digital skills, as part of the broader focus on re-skilling and up-skilling is being accelerated. We are on course to ensure

that all our primary and secondary school learners throughout the country acquire technology and ICT driven literacy by 2030.

The revamped Integrated Skills Outreach Expansion Programme is targeting youth empowerment in trades encompassing building, carpentry, plumbing and electrical installation. This new thrust is designed to accelerate modernisation, industrialisation and the improved quality of living and working environments, particularly for our rural communities.

In the spirit of leaving no one and no place behind, Government has established the Plumtree Polytechnic and the Binga Industrial Training Colleges. Emphasis is being placed on specialist technical and entrepreneurship skills that link directly with industrial and social development to enhance employability and labour productivity.

## **Fellow Zimbabweans;**

Independence opened an array of opportunities for our young people to showcase their talent in sport, recreation, arts and culture.

It is, therefore, commendable that Zimbabweans are participating with distinction, in various regional, continental and international events, which essentially enhances our national brand.

Through the implementation of the Community Sport and Recreation Club system, we are increasing support to sport and recreation across all ages.

I commend private sector players for complementing our initiatives by providing state-of-the-art sporting facilities and sponsorship for various national teams and sporting codes.

The sports, arts and recreation sector is also helping in the fight against the scourge of drug and substance abuse. I appeal to families, churches,

communities and institutions to play their part in the fight against drug and substance abuse. We all have a duty to protect our freedom, Independence and sovereignty by deliberately protecting the young people of our great country.

The long-awaited re-introduction of the Youth Service in Zimbabwe Programme will see our nation mould youth who are patriotic, disciplined and productive citizens.

### **Fellow Zimbabweans;**

Government continues to avail resources to promote women and community empowerment by funding Small and Medium Enterprises. Many are being facilitated to grow, professionalise and modernise their businesses as well as to access both local and international markets.

The safety and security of our women and children is integral to the overall well-being of our society. All forms of violence against women and children are not acceptable in our nation. Under the new

Marriages Act, those found guilty of arranging child marriages and pledging children for marriage now face deterrent punishment. Let us protect our children from retrogressive traditions and practices.

My Administration continues to implement policies in line with our Constitutional obligation to respect and honour our veterans of the liberation struggle.

I urge us to draw lessons from this rich legacy of bravery and look into the future with hope and confidence in our own abilities as an independent and free people.

The professionalisation of our public service is yielding positive results with regards to the quality of service delivery. Performance contracting has been entrenched, with Government Ministers, Permanent Secretaries, Chief Executives of

State-Owned Enterprises and Local Authorities now bound to deliver quality services for our people.

Conformity with sound corporate governance remains a priority to safeguard precious state resources for the development of our country. The welfare of our civil servants will continue to be reviewed in line with economic sustainability.

The “Call to Action” initiative, which I launched last year, compels all Local Authorities to re-focus towards a people centred development thrust and quality service delivery. Poor performance from our Local Authorities is not acceptable. Our people deserve to enjoy a higher quality of life anchored from the grassroots level upwards.

**Fellow Zimbabweans;**

Our country’s foreign policy remains dynamic. “Zimbabwe is a friend to all and an enemy of

none”. We are bolstered by our historic bonds of friendship as well as new partnerships and investments from across the world. Flourishing relationships are being forged based on mutual respect, shared values and win-win benefits. In 2023, new Diplomatic Missions were established in line with our Engagement and Re-Engagement Agenda.

Those nations willing to assist and partner us in our on-going development journey, are welcome.

Zimbabwe will, however, never compromise on our hard-won independence, sovereignty and national pride as well as our rich cultural norms and values.

Our great motherland, Zimbabwe, shall forever be a sweet home for all our citizens, young and old, as well as those in the Diaspora. The enthusiastic support by our Diaspora community to reinvest

back in our country is commendable. Let us continue to build our country together.

Peace and unity remain a corner-stone for sustainable development. I commend all the communities of our great nation for the prevailing peace, harmony and stable security situation throughout our country. In this enduring spirit, Zimbabwe is playing its part towards the realisation of peace and security in the SADC region, Africa, and beyond.

August this year, will see our country assume the Chairmanship of SADC. With humility, our country will continue to promote the vision and ethos of the Founding Fathers of SADC towards consolidating regional unity, peace, stability and propelling economic integration.

**Fellow Zimbabweans;**

The freedom we enjoy today is priceless and irreversible. On this special day, let us once again



make a pledge and promise to stand firm and resolute in defence of our rich liberation heritage. The values that saw us attain freedom, territorial integrity, sovereignty and Independence must be promoted for the realisation of Vision 2030.

Zimbabwe shall forever remain a democratic and constitutional nation. We fought for this democracy. We are a united and peace loving country. This was reflected in the conduct of our 2023 Harmonised General Elections, which put to shame detractors. Well done Zimbabwe.

We, the people of this great nation always emerge victorious. We are masters of our own destiny, a united and resilient people, the descendants of the great Munhumutapa. We shall continue marching forward as one people.

From Plumtree to Mutare, from Zambezi to Limpopo, we are building our country and

improving our quality of life. Together, in unity let us continue to love our country, value this freedom and whole-heartedly preserve this independence. Come rain, come sunshine, we continue marching forward.

Guided by the rotational basis of our National Independence Celebrations, the Midlands Province will host next year's 45<sup>th</sup> Independence Commemorations.

Finally, thank you Manicaland Province for turning out in your numbers to celebrate this sacred national day in our country's calendar. Thank you for opening your hearts and homes, as you did during the liberation struggle, to welcome the whole of Zimbabwe, to your doorsteps. **Tinotenda, Siyabonga** Manicaland Province.

With these remarks, it is now my singular honour and pleasure to wish all Zimbabweans, a happy 44<sup>th</sup> Independence Day Celebrations.

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

**Long Live our Independence.**

**Makorokoto, Amhlophe, Congratulations.**

**God bless you.**

**God bless Zimbabwe.**

**I thank you.**

