



SPEECH

BY

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

AT

**THE GRAND OPENING OF THE HYATT
REGENCY HARARE**

HARARE

13 MAY 2024

Director of Ceremonies;

Our Host, Mr Ali Heddo;

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

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

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

Minister of Tourism and Hospitality Industry,
Hon. B. Rwodzi;

Other Honourable Ministers here present;

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

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

Senior Government Officials;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is my singular honour and privilege to officiate at this momentous occasion as we witness and celebrate the grand opening of this magnificent international hotel, the Hyatt Regency Harare.

Since the advent of the Second Public, the tourism sector has witnessed phenomenal growth in terms of both investments and quality of tourist facilities throughout the country. Last year alone, we realised a 34 % increase in tourism sector arrivals, exceeding the pre-COVID-19 tourist arrivals. The entry of the Hyatt Regency brand to Zimbabwe is yet another testament and vote of confidence in '*Brand Zimbabwe, the World of Wonders*'. It further attests, to confidence investors have in the immense potential of our nation, people, culture and hospitality industry.

At the sidelines of a Zimbabwe Business and Investment Forum that I addressed in the United Arab Emirates, I recall meeting with Mr Ali, where we discussed the numerous investment opportunities in Zimbabwe. Today, I am delighted to witness that the investment plan he outlined has come to fruition. **Congratulations, Makorokoto, Amhlophe.**

The Hyatt Hotel Chain team have shown faith in our vision as the Second Republic. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Hyatt Regency Group for their unwavering commitment to the success of this project.

On behalf of Government, the people of Zimbabwe and the Tourism and Hospitality sector, I, therefore, welcome you to Zimbabwe. Under our mantra '**Zimbabwe is open for business**', be rest assured that we will continue to be an investment destination where capital, investors and visitors will always be safe.

Invited Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen;

Zimbabwe is on an irreversible transformative journey, of modernisation, industrialisation and development. The arrival of Hyatt Regency will undoubtedly contribute to our determination to achieve a US\$5 billion Tourism Economy by 2025 and to accelerate the realisation of our national Vision to become a prosperous and empowered upper-middle-income society by 2030.

In this regard, the Tourism and Hospitality industry is a critical cog in our national development agenda, being the third largest contributor to the national GDP. A comprehensive Tourism and Hospitality Industry Growth Strategy is being implemented, which recognises both domestic and international tourism as key drivers to the growth and expansion of the sub-sector.

The division of the sector into clusters is commendable and set to enhance targeted and efficient Tourism development. I challenge the various clusters tasked with developing and growing Business Tourism, Sports Tourism, Culture and Heritage Tourism as well as, Medical Tourism, among others, to make concerted efforts with clear timelines, to grow the industry.

As we broaden the tourism products in the sector, it is critically important that we continue being innovative, develop new products and have a highly trained and efficient workforce, pegged against global best practices, supported by the requisite modern physical

infrastructure. The investment we are witnessing today will, therefore, go a long way in complementing these aspects. This is applauded, Congratulations.

It is our expectation that the Hyatt Regency Harare Hotel, among its key contributions, will play a pivotal role in our society through employment creation, skills development, and the upliftment of our communities by supporting local businesses. I urge other investors and players in the Tourism and Hospitality Industry to continue with this great work in our economy and society as a whole.

On its part, my Government remains committed to render the requisite support, including through mechanisms such as the Tourism Duty-Free Facility which has benefited the refurbishment programme of this Hotel.

Meanwhile, I am pleased to state that the Hyatt Regency Harare Hotel is one of the facilities we have deemed suitable to host delegates attending the SADC Summit,

in August this year. Such an endorsement amplifies the fact that we are proud, as a Government and country, to be associated with this brand and the facilities at this Hotel.

In line with our Nation's Branding and Destination Marketing Framework, I challenge the Ministry of Tourism and Hospitality Industry and other stakeholders in the sector to have a more coordinated approach, with regards to the projection of our tourism products and brands. This must collectively see us increase the attractiveness of 'Brand Zimbabwe', along with our rich natural resources and cultural heritage.

This is more critical as the footprint of the tourism sector is visible in many areas, including through service excellence, efficient transport, comfortable accommodation, hygienic restaurants, good value shopping, entertainment as well as efficient telecommunication services, among others.

Let us, thus, work together with unity of purpose and stronger synergies to ensure our national development agenda realises the desired cross-cutting successes and shared prosperity.

The new opportunities that have been unveiled as a result of my Government's foreign policy thrust of Engagement and Re-engagement, under the mantra *'Zimbabwe is a friend to all and an enemy to none,'* should be harnessed to further scale up tourism investments and arrivals. Cultural exchanges and people-to-people relations should be promoted, while our collective capacity to hold regional and international Conferences and Meetings should be strengthened.

We remain optimistic that the entry of the Hyatt Regency Harare Hotel will give more confidence to other international hotel brands to invest in Zimbabwe. Further, we look forward to hosting high profile events in our jurisdiction through your initiatives and linkages.

As you establish yourselves in the Zimbabwe market, I urge you to remain conscious of the need to be robust and constantly innovate as you build resilience and adapt to the ever-evolving dynamics of both the local and global hospitality industry.

I am pleased to note that in keeping with our National Clean-up and Beautification Programme, the Hyatt Regency Harare Hotel has committed to responsible tourism and fostering environmental protection in the surrounding area. It is commendable, that the Hotel is partnering with the Harare City Council to look after the surrounding environment, including beautification of the Africa Unity Square. Well done.

I exhort you, the Mayor of Harare, Your Worship Councillor, Mafume to scale up the beautification of our capital city and encourage other Hotel Groups and businesses to adopt spaces surrounding their entities.

This culture of ecological consciousness and stewardship must become the standard norm as we scale up our quest to preserve and protect our natural environment and living spaces.

In conclusion, as we celebrate the entry of the Hyatt Regency Harare Hotel into our tourism sector, let us embrace such investments as we build a prosperous and thriving Zimbabwe. This is the dawn of a new era of growth and progress in the hospitality industry. I call upon other stakeholders in the Tourism and Hospitality sector to take a leaf from the excellent work, modern and immaculate facilities we are witnessing at this hotel.

Congratulations. Makorokoto. Amhlophe.

With these remarks, it is now my honour and privilege to declare the Hyatt Regency Harare Hotel officially opened.

I wish the Hyatt Regency Hotel Group-Harare great success, in this endeavour and others in the future.

God bless you.

God bless Zimbabwe.

I thank you.