



**SPEECH**

**BY**

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

**AT**

**THE LAUNCH OF THE ZIMBABWE  
MULTI-SECTORAL DRUG AND SUBSTANCE  
ABUSE PLAN (2024-2030)**

**HARARE**

**26 JUNE 2024**

Our Directors of Ceremonies, Mr. C. Chiringa and Ms. R. Parirenyatwa;

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

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

Minister of Defence and National Chairman for the National Committee on Drug and Substance Abuse, Hon. O. C. Z. Muchinguri-Kashiri;

The Chief Justice, Hon. L. Malaba;

The Speaker of Parliament, Advocate J. F. Mudenda;

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

Minister of State for Provincial Affairs and Devolution, Harare Metropolitan Province, Hon. C. Z. Tavengwa;

Other Honourable Ministers here present;

The Attorney General, Mrs V. Mabhiza;

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

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

Senior Government Officials;

United Nations Resident Coordinator in Zimbabwe,  
Mr E. Kallon;

Your Worship the Mayor of the City of Harare,  
Councillor J. Mafume;

The President of the Chiefs Council, Chief Mtshana  
Khumalo, and other Chiefs here present;

Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is my honour and privilege to address this gathering as we join the rest of the world in commemorating the United Nations International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, as well as launch of the Zimbabwe Multi-Sectoral Drug and Substance Abuse Plan for 2024-2030. The World Drug Day was set aside for nations to strengthen action and cooperation to achieve the goal of societies that are free of drug abuse.

This year's theme "**The Evidence is Clear: Invest in Prevention,**" highlights the need for society to pay more attention to people who are at risk of developing a drug problem.

This is more so given that there is no nation which will develop in totality if a portion of its citizens is addicted to drugs. In this regard, the scourge of Drug and Substance Abuse has to be dealt with decisively as we march towards Vision 2030. **Vanhu vaka sticker hava vake Nyika.**

### **Ladies and Gentlemen;**

Drug and substance abuse has become a significant public health, socio-economic and national security challenge as well as potential threat to the country's development trajectory.

It also has far-reaching consequences on drug users such as poor health aftermaths, social and economic problems, as well as psychosocial effects, among a range of

negative outcomes. This scourge knows no bounds. It is affecting all socio-economic levels and across religious groupings, destroying lives and families. This public health concern is further undermining the social fabric of our beautiful nation, particularly the youth who are productive segments of our economy.

Global trends indicate that the abuse of drugs and harmful substances results in 3.3 million deaths each year, with at least 15.3 million persons having drug use disorders. Resultantly, approximately 60% of patients admitted in mental health institutions suffer from drug use disorders. This data confirms the extent of the problem at a global scale. Unfortunately, Zimbabwe being part of the global world, has not been spared.

My Government is taking decisive actions using a Whole of Government and Society approach. The nation's successful response to the COVID-19 pandemic taught us many lessons which we must harness as we tackle this scourge.

In this regard, the Second Republic continues to collaborate with all stakeholders in tackling the menace of drug and substance abuse.

This has seen the establishment of the Inter-Ministerial Committee, a multi-sectoral National Committee and a Fund to support our response.

Today, we are also launching the Zimbabwe Multi-Sectoral Drug and Substance Abuse Plan (2024-2030). This Plan avails us with a detailed roadmap that will guide our nation's response to Drug and Substance Abuse in a comprehensive and collaborative manner.

The thrust of the Plan is to improve the health and security of Zimbabweans as enshrined in its Vision of *A Healthy and Secure Nation Free From Illicit Drugs and Substances*. As outlined, we are committed to support multi-stakeholder engagement and actions

across the whole of Government and different sectors through targeted and collaborative interventions.

The Seven critical pillars tabulated in the Plan should result in supply reduction; demand reduction; harm reduction, treatment and rehabilitation; as well as psychosocial support and community reintegration. Greater coordination around policy and legal enforcement; media and communication, supported by resource mobilisation and economic strengthening must accelerate the realisation of visible results.

The development of this Multi-Sectoral Drug and Substance Abuse Plan was a result of collaborative effort. It is a true reminder of what we can achieve when we work together towards a common goal.

I thank those that participated in the development of this Plan. Specifically, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) who provided the lead consultant and the

National Drug and Substance Abuse Committee that has been working hard for this response.

My Government has since committed to establishing a National Drug Agency. The Agency will provide high level strategic leadership, coordinate implementation of the Drug and Substance Abuse Plan and promote multi-sectoral actions aligned with national priorities. Further, it will be tasked with ensuring alignment to regional and international frameworks within our country.

It is commendable that the Plan is aligned with our National Development Strategy. The reality is that, as our society edges closer to the realisation of Vision 2030, we must be proactive and prevent the degeneration of our family norms, cultural values and national identity.

As we become a prosperous and empowered society, it is important to remain grounded on our rich identity as Zimbabwean and African people. We must be deliberate



in protecting our children and young people. This weighty duty lies on all of us. I challenge social scientists to come to the table, proffer the requisite recommendations and scientific literature on trends and risks, as well as opportunities.

Further, we must strengthen the implementation of frameworks to disrupt and destroy supply chains of raw materials for the production of illicit brews and other drugs.

Our content producers and social media influencers are challenged to be responsible with regards to the material and messaging they produce.

Further, local authorities and real estate developers should ensure adherence to by-laws, regulations and land use plans regarding the provision of community recreational centres. The provision of youth lifestyle centres must be prioritised.

## **Ladies and Gentlemen;**

The recovery from drug and substance abuse, as well as prevention of a possible relapse of affected individuals, depends on the wider community and family environment. It takes a village to raise a child. The family, particularly parents, must play their part towards addressing drug and substance abuse, among other social ills. They need to be deliberate and conscious actors in the upbringing of children.

On their part, our young people across all levels must take leadership and responsibility to fight drug and substance abuse.

Meanwhile, Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies, the private sector and Development partners, including the UN family and other stakeholders, are urged to continue closely cooperating in the implementation of this Multi-Sectoral Drug and Substance Abuse Plan for 2024–2030. We should never

grow tired. The future of our beloved motherland depends on our success.

I am very confident that if we remain united, work together, guided by the science-driven strategies and approaches outlined in this Plan, we can overcome this scourge. Drug and substance abuse is alien to us. It is our sacred and collective responsibility as Zimbabweans to preserve our ethos, principles, our culture, **Ubuntu/Hunhu hwedu.**

Meanwhile, Government Ministries should continuously improve the envisaged strategies, including embracing cutting-edge Information Communication Technologies to prevent the influx of this transboundary scourge, in particular at our ports of entry.

The country's security agencies will remain on high alert. Those found distributing drugs and illicit substances will face the full wrath of the law. Further, communities should shun individuals who are

distributing drugs and share intelligence information with law enforcement agencies.

In conclusion, allow me to reiterate that together we can create a safer and healthier future for our country. Let us all stand united and say **No to Drugs and Yes to a Drug-Free Zimbabwe. “Nyika inovakwa, igotongwa, igonamatirwa nevene vayo, vasina kusticker, Ilizwe lakhiwa, libuswe, likhulekelwe ngabanikazi balo”**.

With these remarks, it is now my honour and privilege to declare the Zimbabwe Multi-Sectoral Drug and Substance Abuse, 2024-2030 Plan officially launched.

**God bless you.**

**God bless Zimbabwe.**

**I thank you.**