



Government of Zimbabwe

## **KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

BY

**HIS EXCELLENCY, THE PRESIDENT OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE  
CDE. DR. E.D. MNANGAGWA**

ON THE  
OCCASION  
OF THE

**LAUNCH OF THE GUKURAHUNDI  
COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAMME**

**STATE HOUSE, BULAWAYO**

**14 JULY 2024**

## **[Insert Protocol]**

### **Fellow Zimbabweans,**

- A very good morning to you all. Let me start by acknowledging the commendable effort by this Province in the recent past. I am referring to the resounding victory during the by-election which has seen the revolutionary party gain six (6) seats in the National Assembly in this Province. This is a realisation by our people that our party ZANU PF is progressive and encompasses all in our devolution thrust towards vision 2030. Not only did we see our party gaining momentum in this province, but the trend was witnessed throughout the country and I want to thank all those that have contributed towards this success especially our traditional leaders who are the custodians of our customs and values.

- Today is a pivotal moment in our history. This is the day where we demonstrate that as a country, we are capable of resolving our disputes as Zimbabweans, regardless of their complexity or magnitude.
- This day is significant and stands equal to many other momentous events in our country which have shaped the trajectory of our independence, unity and development.

### **Fellow Zimbabweans;**

- Our history is a testament to our resilience. We, the children of Zimbabwe, are descendants of warriors and nation-builders. In the face of colonial oppression, we stood united and our collective spirit was a force that could not be broken. Whenever we have been confronted by threats to our nationhood, we have been able to unite and confront the challenge in whatever form or context it presents itself.

- During the First and Second Chimurenga, Zimbabweans rose in unity against the colonial oppressors despite concerted and sophisticated efforts by the invaders to divide us along tribal lines. It was our combined effort as freedom-seeking Zimbabweans that enabled us to vanquish the oppressors and emerge victorious as a unified force.

### **Fellow Zimbabweans;**

- Today, we are called upon to summon that same spirit once more as we move to launch a great milestone for which we are gathered here.
- When the history of our post-independence era is written and read by generations to come, **SURELY** this day shall not be a footnote in those sacred writings.

- Behind us lies a past etched with both triumph and hardship. The echoes of the liberation struggle still evoke strong emotions and memories, a testament to the unwavering spirit that forged our nation. Yet, within that history is a chapter which cannot be ignored – the Post-Independence conflict in this Region. This chapter serves as a stark reminder of the fragility of unity and the devastating consequences of disunity.
- We owe a debt of eternal gratitude to our nation's founding fathers, the late President Robert Gabriel Mugabe and the late Father Zimbabwe Cde. Joshua Mqabuko Nkomo, for defying seemingly insurmountable obstacles and forging the Unity Accord of 1987.
- This Unity Accord shall remain as the foundation of our unity and the emblem of our unitary State. Today, we are building on that

foundation and cementing our unity, which we commit to guard jealously as our birth right in this sacred nation.

### **Fellow Zimbabweans;**

- I wish to urge you all not to dwell on the shadows of yesterday, but to focus on the future of our country. Let us turn our attention to a new dawn, a brighter future. A future where the scars of yesterday no longer fester, but become stepping stones on the path to a stronger, more unified Zimbabwe. A nation can only be built by a unified people.

### **Fellow Zimbabweans;**

- Today we are gathered to officially launch the Gukurahundi Community Outreach Programme. This exercise is not simply a mechanism for revisiting grievances but it is a transformative odyssey, a pilgrimage towards healing and

national cohesion. This initiative is a potent symbol of our collective will to bridge the divides that have separated us for too long. It places the onus of healing squarely on the shoulders of its most capable custodians – our esteemed Chiefs.

- With their knowledge of tradition and wisdom, they will guide us through open dialogue, fostering empathy and understanding. As we share our stories, the wounds of the past will begin to mend, thereby enabling national healing.
- History records that all internal divisions amongst us as a people have been instigated by our detractors in various guises through generations. It is our detractors who worked tirelessly to pit one tribe against the other during the colonial era. These oppressors

sought to sow seeds of division amongst liberation struggle fighters and within communities. Their interference and machinations were designed to divide us and consequently created our post-independence conflicts. We are aware that the same forces have not abandoned their ultimate goal of thwarting the realisation of our determination to remain as united Zimbabweans.

- Our unity must stand as an immovable barrier to prevent their historic goal of subjugating us in numerous ways including in the economic sphere. The interference by our detractors manifest itself in different ways.
- They manifest as political parties with a regional agenda which seeks to divide our people and to question the unitary nature of our State. **We see them!**



- They manifest as voluntary organisations ostensibly concerned with the people's plight yet they exaggerate and magnify regional grievances whilst at the same time seeking to belittle our efforts at reconciliation and unity at the behest of their founders. **We see them!**
- They are present in all forms of the media including social media, propagating statements of hatred, difference and vengeance against specific groupings of our nation. **We see them! Let us all say to them you shall not succeed.**

## **Fellow Zimbabweans;**

- This programme is a strong statement of intent in our quest to cement the unity of our country

against the odds that are thrown at us by our eternal detractors. Let us not be swayed by their negativity. Let us silence the whispers of doubt and the rhetoric of division. Let this Community Outreach Programme be a clarion call for unity and a resounding declaration that we choose empathy over animosity and reconciliation over retribution. We are a nation forged in the cauldron of adversity. We have weathered storms before, and we will emerge stronger from this one too.

## **Fellow Zimbabweans;**

- This unity is not simply an aspiration; it is the cornerstone upon which we will build a brighter future for all. A future where every citizen, regardless of their background, feels invested in our shared goals. A future where our

collective energy is directed towards achieving our national vision – a vision where prosperity and opportunity touch every corner of our land, where education unlocks potential, and where healthcare shall remain a right, and never a privilege.

- This vision, ambitious, yet attainable, cannot be realised in a climate of division. It requires the collective strength, the unwavering commitment, and the active participation of every Zimbabwean.

### **Fellow Zimbabweans;**

- This Community Outreach Programme which we are launching today provides a platform for us to come together, to share the burdens of the past, and to collectively chart a course for a brighter future.

- The road ahead will be paved with open dialogue, facilitated by our Chiefs. This process may evoke tears, but they will be tears of catharsis, tears that cleanse the soul and pave the way for healing.
- This healing is for the nation as a whole. It is the release of a collective burden, the shedding of a heavy cloak of distrust and resentment. As we heal, we will rediscover the inherent strength that resides within each of us, the strength that has carried us through countless challenges.

## **Fellow Zimbabweans;**

- This journey of national healing is not a sprint; it is a marathon. It will demand patience,

understanding, and a commitment to the greater good. Going forward, I now entrust the process into the capable hands of our Chiefs who, henceforth, are mandated to take charge of the outreach and subsequent programmes. I have no doubt that they will deliver. Ultimately we shall reap a conducive environment for the development of our country and achieve **our vision of leaving no-one and no place behind.**

With these remarks, it is my pleasure to officially launch the Gukurahundi Community Outreach Programme.

God Bless you all, God Bless Zimbabwe. I THANK YOU. SIYABONGA, TATENDA.