



ADDRESS

BY

**THE PRESIDENT AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF
OF THE ZIMBABWE DEFENCE FORCES,
HIS EXCELLENCY, CDE E. D. MNANGAGWA**

**AT THE
BURIAL OF THE LATE NATIONAL HERO
BRIGADIER GENERAL (RTD) DR MICHAEL
CHAMINUKA**

**NATIONAL HEROES ACRE,
22 JULY 2024**

The Bereaved Chaminuka and Mutanda Families;

First Lady, Amai A. Mnangagwa;

Vice President and Second Secretary of ZANU PF, Hon. General (Rtd) Dr C. G. D. N Chiwenga;

Vice President and Second Secretary of ZANU PF, Hon. Colonel (Rtd) K. C. D Mohadi;

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

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

Other Honourable Ministers here present;

Speaker of Parliament, Hon Adv. J. F. Mudenda as represented;

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

The Chief Justice, Hon. L. Malaba as represented;

President of the National Chiefs' Council, Hon. Sen. M. Khumalo;

Politburo and Central Committee Members;

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

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

Commander Zimbabwe Defence Forces; General P. V.
Sibanda;

Service Chiefs;

Your Excellencies Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

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

Veterans of the Liberation Struggle;

Senior Government Officials;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Comrades and Friends.

Today we are gathered in solemn occasion, here at the
National Shrine, the resting place of our national heroes,
to honour and inter a veteran of the Liberation Struggle

and decorated senior officer who served in the Zimbabwe Defence Forces, the late National Hero, Retired Brigadier General Dr Michael Chaminuka.

The late military intelligence guru and liberation war stalwart, whose Chimurenga name was ‘Cde Pekupai Hondo’, passed on in Harare, on 13 July 2024, at the age of 62.

His passing on, is yet another huge blow, as the nation has lost a loyal, versatile and astute officer, who sacrificed his life to wholeheartedly serve Zimbabwe. His humble disposition, dedication and commitment to duty as well as his exemplary patriotism, unwavering consistency and persistency, in service to our beloved motherland, Zimbabwe, earned this award of national hero, to rest among other great patriots.

On behalf of the nation, Government and our revolutionary mass Party, ZANU PF, my family and indeed on my own behalf, I wish to once again express deepest and heartfelt condolences to the Chaminuka Family over the loss.

I also express sincere condolences to the Mutanda Family following the loss of yet another retired senior officer of the Zimbabwe Defence Forces, Rtd. Brigadier General Lameck Mutanda who passed on and was buried in the United Kingdom. He was conferred with a posthumous National Hero status in recognition of his selfless contribution to the liberation of Zimbabwe and service as an exemplary and loyal military officer in the Zimbabwe Defence Forces.

I call upon the Chaminuka and Mutanda families to find comfort and solace from the great works that were done by these patriotic sons of Zimbabwe. Our prayers and deepest sympathies are with you during this trying and difficult period.

Fellow Mourners, Comrades and Friends;

The late Brigadier General Retired Dr Michael Chaminuka, whose Chimurenga name was ‘Pepukai Hondo,’ was born on 2 January 1962, under Chief Nematombo in Hurungwe District, Mashonaland West Province. He did his primary education at Kapfunde Primary School from 1969 in Hurungwe and was later enrolled for secondary education at St Columbus Secondary School in Honde Valley.

During his Form 2, the school was closed by the racist Smith regime as many of the students had crossed the border into Mozambique to join the Liberation Struggle. Such cowardly strategies by the settler administration were futile and did not impede nor dampen the determination by many young revolutionaries throughout the country from crossing our borders to join the liberation struggle.

The Rhodesian forces responded through torture and wanton arrests of students, in spite of their tender ages.

That brutality remains etched in our memories and strengthens our resolve as a peaceful nation, to defend our freedom, independence and the democracy that we enjoy which is under-written by the blood of our heroes.

The then young Michael moved to St Johns Secondary School (Chikwaka) in Goromonzi District before suspending his studies in late 1977, and crossed into Mozambique to join his contemporaries in the Liberation Struggle.

The journey to foreign bases in our neighbouring countries was not easy. The young cadres, walked long distances often at night, through difficult terrain, with dangerous wild animals, crossing crocodile infested rivers and borders manned by Rhodesian soldiers and laced with land mines. They were emboldened by the hope of a free Zimbabwe.

The late National Hero, Cde Michel Chaminuka arrived at Doroi camp and after several months, he was selected for initial training at Tembwe Base 2 in 1978.

On completion, the late Brigadier General was further selected for a military medical training course in Chimoio under the tutorship of one of our long serving national leaders and Party elder, Cde Dr Sydney Sekeramayi.

After the medical training course, Brigadier General Chaminuka was deployed to the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) National Pharmacy in Mozambique. This strategic facility ensured that medicines and related sundries were constantly available to support those injured in the operational zones.

As the Rhodesian Forces were losing ground in the war front, they resorted to heinous methods of lacing food, medicine and clothing destined for liberation fighters with poison.

The late Brigadier General Chaminuka and his fellow comrades in the pharmacy division had to meticulously execute their duties by checking and testing medicines for poisonous substances before dispatch to the operational zones. This prevented fatalities of liberation fighters at the front.

Fellow Mourners;

At ceasefire in 1979, the late Retired Brigadier General and his fellow comrades remained in Mozambique protecting the Pharmaceutical Warehouse, and ready for any relapse into war and fighting. When it became clear that independence was certain, the late Cde ‘Pepukai Hondo,’ joined other comrades at Echo Assembly Point in Nyanga in 1980 before being transferred to Tongogara Assembly Point in Chipinge.

He was later attested in the Zimbabwe National Army, on 5 January 1981 and deployed to serve under Headquarters 1 Infantry Brigade in Bulawayo Province.

During his illustrious career in the Zimbabwe Defence Forces, the late General Officer held several challenging appointments which include the following; Directing Staff at the Zimbabwe Staff College; Director Military Intelligence Department (MID) at Army Headquarters; and, Director Business Development at the Zimbabwe National Defence University. He also served as a Personal Staff Officer to then Commander Zimbabwe Defence Forces, now Vice President, General C. G. D.N. Chiwenga.

During his distinguished career in the Zimbabwe National Army, the late General Officer rose through the ranks to become Brigadier General. He attended several military courses in intelligence, peacekeeping and general command. The late Dr Chaminuka was a recognised academic in the fields of Defence and Strategic Studies, as well as International Relations. He acquired a Doctorate in Philosophy (Ethics) from the University of Kwazulu Natal, in South Africa.

The military accolades and awards of the late national hero, Retired Brigadier General Chaminuka, included several medals for his exemplary service to our nation, these being the Liberation Medal; Ten Years' Service Medal; Long and Exemplary Service Medal; the Mozambique Campaign Medal; the Democratic Republic of Congo Campaign Medal; the United Nations Commendation Medal and Grand Officer of the Zimbabwe of Merit award.

The late Retired Brigadier General bequeaths to the nation a rich heritage and inspirational legacy of hard work, discipline, and professionalism. The current generation of officers, men and women in our country's security services are challenged to emulate such a culture of excellence, commitment to duty and focus on results, as demonstrated by our late National Hero and his contemporaries.

Comrades and Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen;

As we pay our last respects to the late National Hero, Retired Brigadier General Dr Michael Chaminuka,

let us never forget our long protracted and arduous, liberation war history. We have a duty to keep this history alive, for the benefit of future generations.

“A people who do not know their history are like trees without roots”. This history must, therefore, continue to inspire us as we harness the many opportunities and ward-off the challenges that we may face as we march on to realise Vision 2030. We are forever emboldened by our philosophy **Nyika inovakwa, inotongwa, inonamatirwa nevene vayo. Ilizwe lakhiwa, libuswe, likhulekelwe ngabanikazi balo.**

Comrades;

Zimbabwe is a maturing constitutional democracy, focused on promoting and consolidating our position in the comity of nations. I commend the Government and people of our country who are accelerating preparations and works related to the hosting of the 44th SADC Summit of Heads

of State and Government, where we will assume Chairmanship.

The historic event is preceded by the SADC Industrialisation Week, which will be running next, from the 28th of July to 2nd of August. Industry, commerce and institutions of higher education as well as our entrepreneurs, innovators, micro, small and medium enterprises are encouraged to leverage on this event to further leap-frog our country's ongoing industrialisation and modernisation drive.

Meanwhile, I, call upon all the stakeholders, including the private sector, to partner my Administration and our Local Authorities to enhance the environmental ambience, cleanliness and beauty of our cities in preparation for the Summit, and indeed into the future.

I, equally, encourage all Zimbabweans to continue working hard to ensure a peaceful, safe and welcoming environment for our visiting delegates.

With unity of purpose, across the various sectors, let us collectively bear the weighty responsibility which hosting this important Summit entails.

In concluding, I say to the late national heroes, Brigadier General Retired Michael Chaminuka and Brigadier General Retired Lameck Mutanda, you will be remembered for your invaluable contributions to the liberation struggle and service to our country. You stood firm for justice by defending and protecting the territorial integrity of Zimbabwe, through your loyal service in our Defence Forces. We will also remember your unflinching patriotism and for being selfless team players.

Zororai Murugare Vana Vevhu;

Hambani kahle bantwana benhlabathi;

*Go well Sons of the Soil; Zororai Murugare maGamba
edu, Lalani Ngokuthula maQhawe ethu;*

Rest in Eternal Peace our decorated officers.

God bless you all.

God bless Zimbabwe.

I thank you.