



**ZIMBABWE**

**ADDRESS**

**BY**

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

**AT**

**THE FOURTY FOURTH HEROES DAY  
COMMEMORATIONS**

**12<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST, 2024**



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

Our Director of Ceremonies, Minister of Home Affairs and Cultural Heritage, Hon. K. Kazembe;

The First Lady, Amai Auxillia Mnangagwa;

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

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

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

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

The Chief Justice, Hon. L. Malaba;

Honourable Ministers;

Families of Heroes and Heroines of the Zimbabwe Liberation Struggle;

War Veterans, War Collaborators, Ex-Detainees and Restricttees;

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

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;

Esteemed Traditional Leaders;

Fellow Zimbabweans, including our brothers and  
sisters in the Diaspora;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Comrades and Friends.

It is my great honour and privilege to address you all at these 44<sup>th</sup> Heroes Day Commemorations. Today, we are joining hands in remembering our gallant fighters who paid the supreme sacrifice to free our beautiful motherland from the grip of colonial domination and subjugation.

Their extraordinary courage and the risks they took so that we are Independent will always be remembered. For, it was they who helped shape our nation.

Even in the midst of neo-colonial machinations and illegal sanctions imposed on us, let us honour our heroes with a promise that their sacrifices will serve as our light and inspiration. We vow to resolutely protect the integrity of our Independence and the interests of our nation against those who wish us to fail.

## **Ladies and Gentlemen;**

Our resilience is the bedrock of our survival as a nation. As such, and against all odds, our economy continues to register positive growth. This bears testimony to the success of our diversification thrust, as we forge ahead despite the illegal sanctions, climate-induced shocks as well as international commodity price fluctuations.

Through complementarity between fiscal and monetary policies, we are determined to consolidate the gains so far achieved from the price stability brought about by the Zimbabwe Gold (ZiG) currency.

We are honouring the fighting spirit of our gallant sons and daughters through increased performance of the agriculture sector. In the midst of the El Nino induced drought, our winter wheat cropping season continues to score remarkable successes. A record 121 982 hectares

of wheat have been planted this season. Further, my Government has already commenced rolling out preparations for the 2024/2025 summer cropping season, which is expected to restore food security through increased production, on the back of massive irrigation infrastructure rehabilitation, expansion and utilisation.

Meanwhile, Government is providing social protection for vulnerable communities and households to ensure that no one starves.

**Fellow Zimbabweans;**

Our mining sector continues to benefit from investment into new and existing projects. I exhort players in the sector to ensure that we derive maximum benefits from the precious minerals, which our heroes fought for, by value adding and beneficiating them.

The role of the energy and power sector in socio-economic development through industrialisation cannot be over-emphasised. Low power production levels at Kariba Power Station are being offset by the Hwange 7 & 8 expansion project, which now feeds a constant supply to the national grid. Among numerous power augmentation projects, two large solar plants with a total capacity of 250 megawatts are being developed and will soon be commissioned.

Our manufacturing sector is expanding value addition and beneficiation activities. This has seen manufacturing capacity utilisation increasing to 53%, and the creation of jobs which are yielding decent livelihoods.

Micro, small and medium enterprises continue to scale new heights in promoting women empowerment and community development, and are playing a major role in the manufacturing and commercial sectors.



With a view to enhancing productivity and competitiveness of micro, small and medium enterprises, particularly those run by Liberation Struggle Veterans, the Second Republic is prioritising workspace provision through partnerships with Pension Funds, Local Authorities, the Private Sector and Development Partners. We have since commissioned several Safe Markets and Factory Shells across the country.

Government will soon undertake a comprehensive skills audit which is expected to guide our investment towards upscaling skills delivery for optimal national economic performance. The focus will be on skills required for industrialisation, business enterprise as well as effective and efficient delivery of public services to citizens in modern times.

The devolution and decentralisation programme is also addressing specific community needs, through utilising inter-governmental fiscal transfers.

## **Ladies and Gentlemen;**

Infrastructure upgrading and expansion projects in the transport sector continue to deliver tremendous results for our roads, bridges and related infrastructure. Focus has shifted to the Harare-Chirundu road section, as well as the upgrading of the Harare-Kanyemba, Harare-Nyamapanda, the Old Gwanda Road and the Beitbridge-Bulawayo-Victoria Falls highway, among others. Remarkable progress is visible at the Mbudzi Interchange south of Harare.

The Second Republic is fully aware of the pressing need for decent shelter for all citizens, hence, the continuing robust investment which is transforming both urban and rural communities.

The Second Republic has taken the strategic decision to position the Rural Infrastructure Development Agency, in all rural districts across every province. The Agency is attending to both

gravel and surfaced roads, weirs and small dams for water provision for domestic and agricultural use, as well as infrastructure support for clinics, schools and dip tanks.

Our border posts are undergoing transformation, with physical infrastructure being complemented by technological innovations. This is enhancing the movement of goods and people as well as regional integration.

Earlier this year, the Second Republic relaunched the Youth Service in Zimbabwe Training Programme. This marks an important step in ensuring that young people are patriotic and loyal citizens, who reconnect with our national history and identify with the priceless sacrifices of our liberators. Our centres at Dadaya in Midlands and Vumba in Manicaland are currently training over a thousand youths, while vocational training centres are being modernised with state-of-the-art machinery and digital technology.

As we celebrate the achievements of our heroes, the Second Republic is committed to building a robust health delivery system that ensures the highest standards of care. Government has to date equipped 78% of District Hospitals with fully functional operating theatres for emergency maternity surgeries. This programme is being rolled out to cover all similar facilities.

The crusade which we declared against drug and substance abuse targets a population that is free from the menace. Among a plethora of strategies, Government is focusing on sporting and arts infrastructure development, including in rural areas where the majority of our people live.

On that note, the Rafomoyo Multipurpose Court, which was recently commissioned in Gutu, will be replicated across all districts.

The safety and security of women and girls in an independent and free nation is of paramount importance, hence, we are strengthening ongoing efforts to prevent gender-based violence. Cases are being handled swiftly and firmly in order to deter offenders.

Our priority in the Primary and Secondary school sub-sector is to ensure access to quality education. Through inter-agency collaboration, the highest possible levels of hygiene are being enforced in order to safeguard health. We are enhancing public-private partnerships for the purpose of improving the teaching and learning environment at all previously disadvantaged schools.

As it was during the liberation struggle, where cadres used to innovate during the prosecution of the war, students in the Higher and Tertiary education sub-sector are taking innovation to new heights and creating goods, services, jobs and industries.

Our commitment to the digital technology revolution is a cornerstone for empowerment as part of the enhancement of service delivery and driving economic growth. Hence, Government is seized with initiatives such as the establishment of digital hubs in rural areas. This robust ICT programme is expected to improve healthcare delivery, boost agricultural productivity and create numerous opportunities for individuals, households and communities towards achieving prosperity.

**Fellow Zimbabweans;**

The nation for which our gallant sons and daughters paid the supreme sacrifice is richly endowed with breath-taking landscapes, pristine wildlife and a vibrant culture, all of which contribute to our status as the tourist destination of choice. Highlighting this, the tourism sector has been on a rebound. Recently, we successfully hosted the United Nations Gastronomy Conference,

where our cuisine showcased Zimbabwe at its best. The United Nations Tourism Organisation has since approved the setting up of the African International Culinary Arts Academy in our resort city of Victoria Falls.

In Harare, the Liberation City will soon take its place among the biggest man-made tourist attractions, together with the Museum of African Liberation from which all progressive nations on our Continent will tell the story of their arduous journey to Independence, democracy and freedom.

**Fellow Zimbabweans;**

Issues related to the welfare and economic empowerment of Veterans, Widows and War Victims will continue to be given the attention they deserve.

In our endeavour to mould lasting national consciousness that defends, upholds and promotes

our founding values, the Ministry of Information, Publicity and Broadcasting Services has conducted research on our fallen heroes.

The Second Republic is aware of the need to memorialise the Liberation War through repatriation, reburials and related processes to bring closure to the families of deceased Veterans. Apart from well-known bases such as Freedom Camp, Mkushi, Nyadzonia and Chimoio, Government is availing resources towards repatriating and reburying thousands of Veterans who still lie in shallow and unmarked graves in and outside the country.

The need to accurately record, document and preserve the story of the Liberation Struggle cannot be over-emphasised. There are numerous records, which are available both in Zimbabwe and in countries that supported our revolutionary war. These require collation, annotation and electronic storage to facilitate ease of retrieval.



The Department of National Archives of Zimbabwe is also exploring partnerships with families of nationalists to establish liberation heritage archives and sites in all the ten provinces of our Motherland. The Department has also compiled documentation of liberation heritage narratives, with special focus on the Kamungoma Massacre Site in Gutu, Butcher Site in Rusape, and the former Dzapasi Assembly Point in Buhera, among others.

The Ministry of Veterans of the Liberation Struggle Affairs is expected to increase the visibility and awareness of their programmes, inclusive of the benefits accruing to our veterans of the liberation struggle as well as their dependents.

In addition, many injured War Victims should be registered and compensated appropriately. The majority of widows of our heroes are not aware of their benefits, and some children are not in

school and do not receive medical attention. We are, therefore, running awareness campaigns throughout the country, and requests for assistance are being received.

**Fellow Zimbabweans and Dear Comrades;**

Our 44<sup>th</sup> Heroes Day commemorations are marking a milestone in that we are conferring medals to a total of 184 310 Veterans of the Liberation Struggle who include 56 681 War Veterans; 7 839 Ex-Political Prisoners, Detainees and Restrictees; 110 374 War Collaborators; and 9 990 Non-Combatant Cadres. We will also confer honours and awards to deserving persons as follows:

- the Royal Order of Munhumutapa;
- the Gold Cross of Zimbabwe;
- the Silver Cross of Zimbabwe;
- the Commendation Medal; and
- the Independence Medal.

The conferment of medals on individuals who exhibited valour and performed distinguished humanitarian acts in various fields is intended to immortalise and memorialise the actions of the individuals. We are also honouring the Black Umfolosi ensemble for their song “Unity” which has stood the test of time. The song fosters unity in recognition of the fact that we are one people and one nation of Zimbabwe despite our diverse geographical locations. From Plumtree to Mutare, from Beitbridge to Chirundu, we are one people, united by one national flag and one national anthem.

**Fellow Zimbabweans;**

Our democratic principles require sufficient dissemination of the Constitution. It is pleasing to note that Constitutional advocacy sessions have now been conducted in all provinces of our Motherland and cascaded to district level. In May this year, Government conducted an induction

and sensitisation workshop for all Chiefs on their newly granted role as Marriage Officers. The Chiefs now have authority to preside over customary marriages and intervene in inheritance issues, for the convenience of the general citizenry in communities.

Our commitment to efficient service delivery is unwavering. We are entrenching performance contracting, and the exercise has been completed at most of our top levels. The ultimate target is to ensure value for money from all office bearers, while enhancing accountability to the nation that we all serve.

Over and above this, the Second Republic recognises the important role and selfless sacrifices being made by our patriotic civil service officials towards the transformation of Zimbabwe into an industrialising and knowledge-based upper middle income country.

## **Fellow Zimbabweans;**

In line with our mantra, “a friend to all and an enemy to none” we continue to form strategic alliances with our traditional as well as new partners in both the region and beyond.

Today’s celebrations come a few days before our hosting of the SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government, where we will also be assuming the Chairmanship of our regional body. Build up events and activities have already commenced, including the SADC Industrialisation Week as well as the Standing Committee of Senior Officials’ Meetings.

I once again take this opportunity to thank all Zimbabweans for maintaining a peaceful environment across the length and breadth of our Motherland. Our brand remains that of a progressive and loving people who are hospitable not only to their kith and kin but to all persons created in the image of the Lord Almighty.

Let us all continue to make our visitors feel at home away from home, that we are one with them, and that they shall always be free to visit, whether on business or on private affairs. That is the Zimbabwe that our departed liberators whom we are gathered here to commemorate would have loved to live in: in harmony and always committed to the betterment of mankind.

In conclusion, as we celebrate Heroes Day, let us not take for granted the Independence and freedom that we are enjoying today, which was brought about by the sacrifices of the courageous men and women, who fought against the brutal racist colonial regime.

I, therefore, call upon every one of us to emulate their lives through playing our part by laying the foundations for a more prosperous future for both present and future generations. **Nyika inovakwa, inotongwa, inonamatigwa nevene vayo/ilizwe**

**lakhiwa, libuswe, likhulekelwe ngabanikazi balo.**

As we honour our National Heroes today, may we not only look back with admiration at their profound sense of patriotism but also look at the future of our country and its unrelenting longing for the same profound sense of patriotism from us.

To the families of our heroes and heroines, let me once again commit my Government to the furtherance of the principles that inspired thousands to take up arms and liberate this nation. Our determination to look after your welfare is unwavering, and we shall always be bound by the lofty values of Servant Leadership, patriotism and loyalty as our great nation continues its relentless march towards the attainment of Vision 2030. As we would chant from the trenches of the Struggle, *Aluta Continua...* the Struggle Continues... and Victory is Certain.

May the dear souls of our departed heroes and heroines rest in eternal peace.

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

**Long live Zimbabwe.**

**Ngiyalibonga lonke.**

**Ndinokutendai mose.**

**God bless you all.**

**God bless Zimbabwe.**

**I thank you.**