



**ADDRESS**

**BY**

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

**AT**

**THE BURIAL OF GENERAL (RTD)  
CDE MAKHETHI NDEBELE**

**NATIONAL HEROES ACRE**

**5 AUGUST 2024**

The Bereaved Ndebele Family;

The First Lady, Dr. A. Mnangagwa;

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

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

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

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

Other Honourable Ministers here present;

Speaker of the National Assembly, Adv. J. F. Mudenda;

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

The Chief Justice, Hon. L. Malaba;

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,  
Gen. P. V. Sibanda;

Service Chiefs;

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

Your Excellencies Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

Senior Government Officials;

Veterans of the Liberation Struggle;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Comrades and Friends.

We gather once again in solemn occasion here at the  
National Heroes Acre to lay to rest a gallant son of  
Zimbabwe, a distinguished patriot, pioneer liberation

fighter and a former member of the Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA) High Command General (Rtd) Cde Makhethi Ndebele. He passed on, in Bulawayo. He was 82. His passing on, is yet another huge blow to our Nation, and the community of liberation war veterans.

On behalf of the Government and the people of Zimbabwe, our revolutionary mass Party, ZANU PF, my family, and indeed on my own behalf, I express my heartfelt condolences to the Ndebele family at this sorrowful loss. May you find solace in that the contributions of our late national hero towards liberating our motherland, Zimbabwe, will remain etched in the history of our country.

Your loss is felt by us all, and the Nation he so diligently served with honour and a sense of selfless sacrifice.

## **Comrades and Friends;**

The late Cde Makhethi Ndebele, whose Chimurenga name was '**Comrade Jack Mpofu**', was born on 6 June 1942 in Plumtree, Mangwe District under Chief Tshitshi, in Matabeleland South Province. He did his primary education at Tshitshi Primary School from Sub A to Standard 3 and later proceeded to Mbakwe Mission, until Standard 6.

The late Cde Mpofu is revered for being one of the pioneer combatants who was among the first 200 cadres to join the war of liberation in 1967. This was after ZAPU and ZANU successfully lobbied the Organisation of African Unity to train cadres during the executing of the war of liberation. We forever remain grateful to our continental body, now the African Union and the Founding Fathers of our Continent for their vision to see a free and independent Africa.

Individually and collectively, as member states of this Continent, we shall continue to treasure and defend our liberation, independence, freedom and sovereignty.

The National Hero we are laying to rest today trained at Morogoro in Tanzania under the military command of Cde Albert Nxele, with Zimbabwe's Ambassador to Russia, Cde Ambrose Mutinhiri, as Chief of Staff. The instructors included Comrades Nikita Mangena, Lookout Masuku and Sam Mfakazi, among others.

It was at Morogoro that Cde Ndebele was trained together with Umkhonto weSizwe cadres. Following his initial training, he proceeded for further training in reconnaissance and intelligence in the then Soviet Union. Upon his return from the Soviet Union, he was appointed instructor at Morogoro in Tanzania, where many guerrilla fighters and Umkhonto weSizwe cadres passed through his tutelage.

Our late national hero “Cde Jack Mporo” was later deployed to the front, operating as a commander in the Western Front with other senior ZIPRA cadres in areas such as Victoria Falls and Hwange.

Our national hero was part of the entourage when ZIPRA Commander, General Nikita Mangena was killed in a landmine explosion following an ambush by the Rhodesian Forces near Deka Drum in the Zambezi Valley on 28 June 1978. He suffered a life-long injury due to this incident. After independence, Cde Ndebele continued to play a very critical role in nation building as a member of the Zimbabwe Liberation War Veterans Association.

### **Fellow Mourners;**

Let us never forget that it is through the selfless and consistent sacrifices made by cadres such as the late Cde Makhethi Ndebele and many other departed heroes and heroines, that Zimbabwe continues to enjoy its sovereignty, Independence, unity and development.

In their honour, let us remain vigilant and united across every sector of the society towards safeguarding, preserving and promoting our national interests.

Presently, there are concerted efforts to reverse the gains of our protracted liberation struggle. These attacks take many forms, including peddling falsehoods about our country. It is a shame that there is a deliberate and foreign funded campaign which is void of the evident and unprecedented success milestones we are witnessing across every facet of society and the economy. We shall never be deterred or discouraged. We are marching forward ever, backwards never.

Programmes and projects which help lift many of our people out of poverty into prosperity will continue to be implemented and accelerated. I invite all the citizens of our great country, at home and abroad, to join hands as we build the country brick by brick, stone upon stone, forever emboldened by our development philosophy

**Nyika inovakwa, inotongwa, inonamatigwa nevene vayo/ilizwe lakhiwa, libuswe, likhulekelwe ngabanikazi balo.**

The strategies by some powers designed to sow discord and division between fraternal states in our Region and in our Continent will never succeed. We defeated imperialistic agendas to achieve our liberation and Independence. We shall defeat them in the present, again and again.

Their interests are never designed for Africa and its people, but to control our strategic resource endowments, including our God given minerals, which we have in abundance. Wherever their nefarious machinations show their ugly face, these shall be resisted, both in honour of our heroes and for the economic prosperity, peace and stability for present as well as future generations.

On our part as Zimbabwe, we remain deeply rooted in our Diplomatic mantra that ‘Zimbabwe is a friend to all and an enemy to none.’

**Ladies and Gentlemen;**

We take pride in that in a few days to come, our Nation will host the 44<sup>th</sup> Ordinary SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government. Thereafter, we assume Chairmanship of our Sub-Regional body, which is a key lever for defending our collective peace and sovereignty. Now the SADC flag, together with our national flag and alongside side those of Sister Republics have been hoisted in readiness for the glorious occasion, serves as a symbol of the common history and shared future we have as a united and indivisible SADC region.

As decedents of Munhumutapa, we are ready to rise and shine as we carry the mantle of our Founding Fathers and forebears.

Let us also use the occasion to showcase the massive progress we have registered against all odds, in spite of the illegal sanctions imposed on us and climate change.

We have a duty to motivate, inspire and share experiences with our counterparts towards the prosperity and a higher quality of life of the peoples of the entire SADC region.

Our vision of becoming a prosperous and empowered upper middle-income society by 2030 can only be attained through positive image building. Our individual and collective efforts must deepen national cohesion and advance the development, modernisation and industrialisation of Zimbabwe.

As we strive to achieve our national economic developmental goals, we take lessons from the exemplary life of the late national hero, Cde Ndebele, to raise our consciousness and always guard against ruinous as well as

predatory prescriptions on our economic and political governance architecture.

**Fellow Mourners;**

Today, we are befittingly laying to rest a cadre with a strong allegiance to the ethos of our liberation struggle, an epitome of patriotism and loyal man to the nation, who never wavered. He remained consistent and persistent in serving his country and people. I call upon all Zimbabweans, especially the youth, to draw upon the good traits of selfless sacrifice, patriotism, bravery, courage and commitment that were exhibited by the late National Hero Cde Makhethi Ndebele.

Let this emotive gathering here at this sacred national shrine once again reconnect us to our rich liberation heritage and remind us of the obligation we have to consolidate the gains of independence, freedom and the right to self-determination. We are one unitary state, from Plumtree to Mutare; from Beitbridge to Chirundu.

Finally, as we lay to rest our national hero, the late Cde Makhethi Ndebele alongside his colleagues at this National Shrine, for remembrance and eternal reverence; I say to our liberation military supremo and instructor Cde Ndebele:

**Famba Zvakanaka Mwana Wevhu;**

**Hamba Kahle Mntwana Wenhlabathi;**

**Go well Son of the Soil;**

**Zorora Murugare Gamba Redu;**

**Lala Ngokuthula Qhawe Lamaqhawe.**

Rest in Eternal Peace our dear Comrade.

**God bless you.**

**God bless Zimbabwe.**

**I thank you.**