

## **THIRTY-EIGHTH POST-CABINET PRESS BRIEFING**

**26<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2024**

### **1.0 UPDATE ON THE MARKETING OF 2023/2024 SUMMER SEASON CROPS; FOOD SECURITY OUTLOOK TO MARCH 2025; 2024 WINTER CROPS PRODUCTION; AND THE 2024/2025 SUMMER SEASON PLAN**

Cabinet received and noted an update on the 2023/24 Summer Crops Marketing, Food Security Outlook to March 2025, 2024 Winter Crops Production, and the 2024/2025 Summer Season Plan, which was presented by the Minister of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development, Honourable Dr. A.J. Masuka.

The current grain stock at the Grain Marketing Board (GMB) stands at 253 665 metric tonnes, with 235 142 metric tonnes being wheat while the balance is for maize and traditional grains.

Cabinet highlights that a total of 1 036 721 metric tonnes, comprising 852 260 metric tonnes of maize, 184 121 metric tonnes of wheat and 340 metric tonnes of wheat flour were imported by the private sector as at 20 November, 2024. To date, 885 import permits have been issued to 423 companies to import 4 430 280 metric tonnes of maize against the deficit 1 million metric tonnes. Government continues to monitor volumes of imports, stocks at millers, import prices, and import sources ahead of the festive season in order to eliminate arbitrage opportunities.

The nation is also being advised that a total of 563 961 metric tonnes of wheat have been harvested to date from the Winter Cereals Production Plan. Of this total, 91 149 metric tonnes have been delivered to the Grain Marketing Board, with 83 149 metric tonnes being from the Agricultural Rural Development Authority.

Water availability and grazing condition have begun to respond to the recent rains. Feeds have been distributed to 27 districts in order to support 107 387 cattle. Communities have mobilized resources to complement Government efforts.

Meanwhile, the Summer Plan aims to increase production of 2024/2025 season cereals to 3 274 200 metric tonnes from 744 271 metric tonnes in the 2023/2024 season. The overall production volumes of major crops are expected to increase by 347%. The plan is to produce enough to feed the nation and to replenish the Strategic Grain Reserve. The country expects to receive normal to above normal rainfall during this season, and farmers have already started planting summer crops across all the provinces.

A total of 3 241 000 hectares is targeted to be planted to summer crops this season as follows: Maize, 1 800 000 hectares; Sorghum, 418 000 hectares; Pearl millet, 275 000 hectares; Finger Millet, 27 000 hectares; Soya beans, 77 000 hectares; Groundnuts, 385 000 hectares; Sugar Beans, 55 000 hectares; Roundnuts, 110 000 hectares; and African Pea, 93 500 hectares.

Of the total hectarage, 635 584 hectares is targeted for the Pfumvudza/Intwasa Climate-Proofed Presidential Inputs Supply Scheme, and the rest by CBZ, AFC, NMB and other banks; and by the private sector and individual farmers. Meanwhile, distribution of Presidential Inputs including cotton has commenced. Progress with the Silo expansion project is on course at the following depots: Kwekwe; Mutare Grain; Mhangura; Mvurwi; Timbermills; Lupane; and Rutenga.

On cotton, a total of 427 550 farmers will be supported through contract farming with a target covering an area of 278 750 hectares. The target production for tobacco during the 2024/2025 season is 300 million kilograms. Currently, 120 963 growers have registered for the 2024/2025 season, which is 8% more than 112 445 growers who registered during the same period in 2023. Of these farmers' hectarage, some 93% is being produced under contract from 27 registered contractors for the 2024/2025 season. The total area transplanted as at 20 November 2024 is 43 814 hectares, compared to 41 699 hectares planted in 2023.

## **2.0 PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP PROJECT BETWEEN THE MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND FORBES BORDER CONSORTIUM ON THE UPGRADING AND MODERNISATION OF FORBES BORDER POST**

Cabinet considered and approved the Public-Private Partnership project between the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructural Development and Forbes Border Consortium on the Upgrading and Modernisation of Forbes Border Post, which was presented by the Minister of Finance, Economic Development and Investment Promotion, Honourable Professor Mthuli Ncube, as Chairman of the Public-Private Partnerships Committee.

As part of the Second Republic's drive towards the modernisation of the country's ports of entry, the Forbes Border Consortium has been contracted by the Government of Zimbabwe for the upgrading and modernisation of Forbes Border Post in Manicaland Province. The approval to implement the project is the second phase following a Full Feasibility Study conducted by the Consortium and the ensuing validation process by the Government of Zimbabwe. The Forbes Border Consortium will implement the modernisation project under a Design, Build, Finance, Operate and Maintain framework. The financing arrangement seeks to promote a private sector-led economy, reduce fiscal pressure while leveraging on royalty payments during the project life span. The scope of the project includes among others, the following:

- i. Renovation of border post buildings and infrastructure;
- ii. Construction of new buildings, facilities such as weighbridges, roads and parking lots;
- iii. Enhancement, improvement, and integration of Information Communication Technology Systems;
- iv. Significant improvements to traffic processing systems; and
- v. Construction of staff houses.

The infrastructural investment is poised to generate positive growth in terms of improved control of traffic along the Beira corridor; establishment of a preferred transit link to the SADC Region; increased Treasury collections through enhanced monitoring and collection capabilities; improved security and efficiency for transporters; and improved connectedness of Zimbabwe to the Region thereby positioning the country to benefit from the African Continental Free Trade Area through faster movement of goods in the region.

### **3.0 PRINCIPLES FOR THE AMENDMENT OF THE POSTAL AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACT [CHAPTER 12: 05]**

Cabinet approved the Amendment to the Principles for Amending the Postal and Telecommunications Act [*Chapter 12:05*], as presented by the Minister of Information Communication Technology, Postal and Courier Services, Honourable Tatenda A. Mavetera.

The Amendment will ensure specialised expertise, operational efficiency, financial accountability, policy coherence and alignment with global best practices in terms of the utilisation of the Universal Services Fund.

These factors will contribute to the effective management and utilisation of the fund, ultimately supporting the goal of universal access to communication services in Zimbabwe.

#### **4.0 REPORT ON THE SADC EXTRAORDINARY SUMMIT MEETING OF THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT**

Cabinet received and noted a Report on the Southern African Community Development (SADC) Extraordinary Summit, which was held on 20 November 2024, in Harare., as presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Honourable Professor Amon Murwira.

His Excellency the President Cde Dr. Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa chaired the Summit as the SADC Chairman. The Summit was attended by Heads of State and Government from Botswana, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Madagascar and Mozambique. Tanzania was represented by the President of Zanzibar, while South Africa was represented by its Deputy President and the Kingdom of Eswatini was represented at the level of Prime Minister. Angola, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, Seychelles, and Zambia participated at Ministerial level.

The Summit considered the report on SAMIDRC, which indicated that the Mission had provided stability.

The Summit noted the report submitted by President Nyusi of the Republic of Mozambique, on the post-election political and security situation in Mozambique.

The Summit commended the SADC Chair, His Excellency the President Cde Dr. Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa for convening of the Summit and for the excellent facilities that were put at the disposal of the visiting delegations.

**I THANK YOU!**