



CLOSING REMARKS

BY

THE PRESIDENT, HIS EXCELLENCY,

DR. E. D. MNANGAGWA

AT

THE LAST CABINET MEETING FOR THE

YEAR 2024

STATE HOUSE

17 DECEMBER 2024

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

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

Honourable Ministers;

Attorney-General, Mrs. V. Mabhiza;

Chief Secretary, Dr. M. Rushwaya;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Today marks the last Cabinet Meeting for the 2024 Cabinet Calendar. A synopsis of the business transacted during the year reveals that, as Government, we have made notable headway in our people-centred national development Agenda. In this respect, during the course of the year, we crafted, reviewed and implemented impactful policies, programmes as well as projects in our quest to fulfil the collective aspirations of our citizens.

In a nutshell, the 2024 Cabinet Calendar was a success, with its robust and frank deliberations.

These discussions were facilitated by the greatly improved quality of memoranda submitted to Cabinet. Guided by the principle of collective responsibility, it was pleasing that as Ministers, you rose above your respective sectoral interests, in favour of objectivity and the common national good, with coordination being more seamless. Congratulations.

Let me, however, hasten to emphasise that Cabinet processes are anchored on the timely submission of vital documents and regular attendance by Ministers and Officials. These include to both ad-hoc as well as standing Cabinet Committees. The worrisome tendency by Ministers and Senior Officials to absent themselves from meetings is untenable.

In some cases, junior officials are delegated to attend and merely “bench-warm” the meetings. This culture is tantamount to dereliction of duty. Permanent Secretaries should ensure that in their absence, only Directors and above should attend Working Party Meetings.

In the 2025 Calendar Year, the Chief Secretary is directed to strictly monitor individual attendance and ensure that errant Ministers and Officials toe the line or risk dire consequences. Ministers should remain mindful that Cabinet business takes precedence over all other business.

In cases where Deputy Ministers are assigned, they should be adequately capacitated to enable active participation in the requisite deliberations. To this end, I direct that in the 2025 programme cycle and going forward, Deputy Ministers must now sign Performance Contracts. It is incumbent upon Ministers to ensure that their Deputies are comprehensively briefed on Government business and given the latitude for effective involvement.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Zimbabwe's assumption of the SADC Chairmanship during the 44th SADC Summit in August and subsequently the holding of the SADC Extraordinary

Summit, placed the spotlight on the country's organisational and diplomatic capabilities. I am profoundly grateful to you all for the planning and hard work exhibited during the preparatory stages and the actual hosting of the events. Well done.

Following my declaration of a State of Disaster for the 2023/2024 Summer Season, due to the El Nino-induced drought, sufficient grain continues to be distributed to beneficiaries under the Food Deficit Mitigation Programme. The timely delivery of food aid as well as agriculture inputs to our people at the grassroots level must be prioritised while complaints that transport costs are sometimes passed on to our people, must be honestly addressed.

I, therefore, challenge the relevant Ministries, Department and Agencies to apply themselves and devise strategies that will increase transport and logistical efficiency in getting aid and support to our people.

On health and childcare issues, I commend stakeholders in the sector for implementing multi-pronged interventions which saw us combat the cholera outbreak during the first half of the year. However, the lingering threat of cholera and Mpox, among other public health emergencies, will be cautiously monitored.

Mechanisms are in place to deploy the recently approved Multi-Hazard Contingency Plan to curtail the effects of floods and other national disaster emergencies. I call upon you to provide leadership and assist your communities to mitigate damage and harm to property and life in the wake of the ensuing rainfall season.

On the economic front, the revision of economic growth projections, on the back of the El Nino-induced drought's negative impact on agricultural output, was inevitable. However, we remain resolute and optimistic that the fiscal and monetary reforms introduced during the year will increasingly underpin currency stability and usher economic rebound.

Our energy sector continues to experience shortages of electricity on account of low generation at the Kariba Hydropower Station. The improved use and exploitation of renewable energy sources in the country, particularly solar energy by companies and households, continues to reduce national grid power demand. The initiatives by ZESA through new models of Independent Power Producers are welcome moves to crowd-in the private sector in power generation, specifically for their respective energy needs. More campaigns should be mounted to encourage our people, in both rural and urban areas to adopt renewable energy for domestic use.

It is encouraging that the housing stock in our country is modernising and improving in both quality and quantity. Government will, on its part, continue to channel resources towards housing delivery, as well as the upgrading and rehabilitation of both residential and institutional accommodation nationwide.

The strides made by local authorities during the course of the year are commendable. These include the conclusion of Master Plans by most local authorities. There are also glimpses of mindset change within that sector. Regrettably, cases of corruption emanating from the sector remain worrisome. The bold decision by Harare City Council to transfer waste disposal and management to private entities should be supported and replicated in other local authorities. Quality service delivery to our citizens remains the core objective.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

The modernisation and development indicators that are evident throughout all provinces and districts of the country undoubtedly speak to the ongoing success of our Decentralisation and Devolution agenda. This has seen an improved standard of life and living environments for our people with enhanced basic social services infrastructure, particularly in health and education as well as water and sanitation.

Meanwhile, our adoption of the Zimbabwe Inter-Governmental Fiscal Systems Administrative Manual should help foster transparency and accountability in the utilisation of resources disbursed by the central Government.

My Administration continues to prioritise the digital economy and empowerment of youths, women and Small and Medium Enterprises. Innovative financing models should be pursued to accelerate the reconstruction of Mbare Traders Market, in the aftermath of an unfortunate fire disaster. Equally, the modernisation of work spaces, throughout the country, must remain on our priority list to guarantee that our people enjoy the dignity of work.

The digital technology revolution, is the cornerstone of modernisation, industrialisation and efficient service delivery to drive sustainable economic growth. Inroads in the digitalisation of government information and services are occurring at a worryingly slow pace.

It is a misnomer that with the abundant ICTs skills and capacities among young people, our Government has only a few functional and up-to-date Ministry websites. More should be done to improve this situation. Likewise, Government communication dissemination strategies and overall messaging must be improved.

As we close the year and set the agenda for 2025, the need for structural transformation of our Ministries, Departments and Agencies to propel our Vision 2030 is of paramount importance. We witnessed the role of ARDA in anchoring critical aspects of our Agriculture Food Systems and Transformation Strategy, along with entities such as Zimtrade on the trade side and Institutions of Higher Learning with regards science, technology and innovation.

Similar pursuits must therefore be made to identify strategic agencies within your respective Ministries to increase impactful programmes at both the grassroots and macro-economic levels.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

As Cabinet takes a well-deserved break, let us take note that we are not shutting down Government business and the subsequent delivery of services. Mechanisms must be put in place to balance the demands of family and associated festivities with serving the people of our great motherland, Zimbabwe. The service delivery demands of the people of Zimbabwe must be responded to timely. After all, we are a Government by the people and for the people.

In conclusion, I thank you individually and collectively, including the Chief Secretary and our Cabinet Secretariat for working tirelessly and diligently throughout the year, for the good of our motherland, Zimbabwe. I expect that you will enjoy end-of-year festivities with family and your communities.

With these remarks, may I on my own behalf and that of my family, wish you a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

God bless you all.

God bless Zimbabwe.

I thank you.