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

**9TH NOVEMBER, 2021**

1. **PROGRESS REPORT ON THE COUNTRY’S RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, PROCUREMENT AND ROLLOUT OF VACCINES.**

Cabinet received an update in respect of Zimbabwe’s Covid- 19 pandemic response as presented by the Honourable Vice President Dr. C.G.D.N. Chiwenga as Chairperson of the Ministers’ National Committee.

The nation is advised that as at 8 November 2021, Zimbabwe’s cumulative cases stood at 133 205 with 128 126 recoveries and 4690 deaths. The recovery rate was 96%, with 389 active cases recorded.

Generally, the national number of new cases fell during the week under review, with 210 cases recorded compared to 416 the previous week. Most of the cases were from schools, and areas that recorded significant number of new cases include Masvingo (56); Bulawayo (41); and Manicaland (32).

Regarding the update on the national vaccination programme, as at 8 November 2021, a total of 3 379 391 first doses had been administered and 2 654 079 people having received their second dose.

Cabinet would like to express appreciation for the response by Zimbabweans that has resulted in the country doing better than most countries in Africa. However, we need to remain vigilant to ensure that we attain our set target of achieving herd immunity by year end. To this end, let us all ensure that all those who are yet to be vaccinated present themselves for inoculation. The Government would like to assure the nation that Government has procured adequate stocks for this exercise. In addition, vaccination of the 16-17 year age group with the Sinovac vaccine has been certified safe and the group is encouraged to present themselves for vaccination. Sub-national structures have been tasked to come up with various initiatives to ramp up vaccination uptake to achieve herd immunity by year end.

The Ministry of Health and Child Care has put in place a detailed monitoring plan for the vaccination of pregnant and breastfeeding women as recommended by Medicines Control Authority of Zimbabwe (MCAZ), in line with World Health Organisation (WHO) guidelines.

The nation is further advised that the country is still under Level 2 Lockdown and thus enforcement of Statutory Instrument 228b of 2021 still subsists. This means that all gatherings, including bars must only allow vaccinated clients. Let us all continue to work together to forestall a possible 4th wave.

1. **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS/CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR THE 2021-2022 RAINFALL SEASON**

Cabinet received and approved the Proposed Emergency Preparedness Plan for the 2021-2022 Rainfall Season as presented by the Minister of Local Government and Public Works, Honourable July Moyo as Chairperson of the Cabinet Committee on Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Management.

The nation is informed that climate-induced hazards are on the increase, particularly in Zimbabwe and generally in the SADC region as they are becoming more complex to manage. These hazards include droughts; floods; hailstorms; lightning; and strong winds. The country has also witnessed increased incidents of a geo-physical and human-induced nature such as landslides; earthquakes; environmental degradation; veld fires; road/rail/air/water craft, mining, industrial accidents; spillages and explosion of industrial chemicals.

Cabinet is pleased to report that the Emergency Preparedness Plan has been put in place with a view to reducing potential losses due to disasters. The implementation of the plan, which will be spearheaded by the Civil Protection Unit, consists of various programmes which include the following, among others: (a) education and awareness on hazards related to the rainy season; (b) raising alarm/alert mechanisms using indigenous knowledge systems and local resources; (c) assisting in rapid and comprehensive damage assessments and setting up of priorities; (d) implementing response/recovery programmes and provide feedback as necessary; (e) providing appropriate equipment and machinery: and (f) instituting effective early warning systems. Government has set aside adequate financial resources to cover the set programmes and stakeholders have been directed to commence drills in anticipation of any eventuality.

1. **PROPOSED REVIEW OF THE ZIMBABWE BROADCASTING CORPORATION LICENCE FEES**

Cabinet received and approved a report of the Cabinet Committee on National Development Planning on the proposed Review of Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation Listeners’ Licence Fees as presented by the Minister of Information, Publicity and Broadcasting Services.

Cabinet noted that the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation’s equipment for both radio and television studios is obsolete and has outlived its lifespan, and therefore requires urgent replacement to enable the broadcaster to improve service delivery.

Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation will soon be launching two more channels towards fulfillment of its mandate, and for these channels to be effectively rolled out, in addition to the on-going digitalization of its transmitters, the organisation has to be capacitated. Listeners’ licence fees should cover 80% of the Corporation’s operational costs.

1. **REPORT ON THE EASE OF DOING BUSINESS REFORMS**

Cabinet considered and approved the setting up of the Companies and Intellectual Property Office of Zimbabwe as presented by the Minister of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs, Honourable Ziyambi Ziyambi.

The nation is advised that currently the Companies and Intellectual Property Offices are sections within the Department of Deeds, Companies and Intellectual Property. The scenario has remained rigid and unchanged for the past forty years and can no longer keep up with the increasing obligations and modern business demands for real time service. In the advent of the promulgation of the Companies and Other Business Entities Act, there is need to operationalise this requirement.

It is therefore essential to restructure and create a fully constituted Companies and Intellectual Property Office, devoted to dealing with companies and intellectual property matters. This will go a long way in improving the ease of doing business in Zimbabwe.

Cabinet also considered and approved the proposed transfer of the Office of the Master of the High Court from the Judicial Service Commission to the Ministry of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs as presented by the Minister of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs, Honourable Ziyambi Ziyambi.

In coming up with the decision, Cabinet noted that Section 3 of the Administration of Estates Act (Chapter 6:01) which created the Office of the Master of the High Court clearly states that the office forms part of the Public Service. On the other hand, in performing its functions of supervising insolvent estates, which activities involve administration of liquidation of companies, judicial management, corporate rescue and sequestration of estates of individuals, the Master’s Office does not perform those functions as a court but rather as an administrative board reposed with authority to supervise the winding up of insolvent estates as provided for by the Insolvency Act.

In addition, the Master of the High Court collects revenue in the form of estate duty and estate fees. This executive function is performed in aide of Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA), consequently feeding into the fiscus. This function constitutes the bulk of the Master of the High Court’s work as revenue is collected from all estates.

1. **HOSTING OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF AFRICAN CULTURES (ICAC) 2021: 23-25 NOVEMBER**

Cabinet considered and approved the report on the Hosting of the International Conference of African Cultures (ICAC)2021: 23-25 November 2021 as presented by the Dr. S.G.G. Nyoni, Acting Minister of Youth, Sport, Arts and Recreation.

The nation is informed that Zimbabwe intends to host the 3rd Edition of the International Conference on African Cultures (ICAC) under the theme,” **Africa speaks: Dealing with Repatriation from an African Perspective**” The conference will run from 23 to 25 November 2021 in Harare at the National Gallery of Zimbabwe (NGZ).

International Conference of African Cultures (ICAC) 2021 seeks to explore the issues around restitution, return and repatriation of African cultural property held outside the continent. It is undisputed that these cultural artefacts are carriers of deep personal meanings and national importance to the countries of origin more than where they are currently domiciled. The country intends to ride on this platform to gain traction in its international engagement and re-engagement efforts by affording Africa in particular, and the World in general, to define repatriation and interrogate colonial injustice which resulted in the displacement of African cultural goods.

The conference will incorporate aspirations of Africa’s Agenda 2063, the Charter for African Cultural Renaissance as well as the 2021 African Union theme “**Arts, Culture and Heritage: Levers for building the Africa we want.”**  In this regard, the resolutions of the conference will feed into the African Union Plan of Action on Culture and Creative industries.

1. **PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND RENOVATION OF THE GREAT ZIMBABWE WORLD HERITAGE SITE.**

Cabinet considered and approved the memorandum on the Cooperation project between the National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe (NMMZ) and the French Development Agency (AFD) as presented by the Minister of Home Affairs and Cultural Heritage, Honourable Kazembe Kazembe on the improvements of infrastructure at the Great Zimbabwe World Heritage Site.

The nation is hereby informed that the project intends to improve the infrastructure at the Site as well as enhancing capacity building, economic development and cultural empowerment of the local communities.

The nation is further informed that, following a feasibility study carried out by the National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe, the following major challenges faced by Great Zimbabwe Heritage Site were identified :

1. Documentation and conservation of the tangible and intangible heritage;
2. Interpretation and visitor facilities;
3. Management and promotion of additional tourism attractions; and
4. Management and protection of the Great Zimbabwe Heritage Site and its physical and social environment.

The cooperation ensures the development and renovation of the Great Zimbabwe World Heritage Site, mobilization and capacity building of the National Museums and Monuments and development needs of communities around Great Zimbabwe. It is envisaged that upon completion, the site will attract more domestic and foreign tourists and make them stay longer at the site.

**7.0 UPDATE ON THE 2022 POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUS**

Cabinet received an update on the 2022 Population and Housing Census as presented by the Minister of Finance and Economic Development, Honourable Professor Mthuli Ncube.

The nation is informed that preparations for the 2022 Population and Housing Census are on-going with 31 000 tablets to be used during the exercise having been delivered so far. Census mapping has covered about 84.6% of the country and is expected to be complete by 21st January 2022. Provincial and district census structures have been set up and Zimstats is sensitizing structures to be prepared for the census. Training of enumerators of the pilot census is in progress.

**8.0 GOVERNMENT IS NOT CONSIDERING INTRODUCING**

**ANOTHER CURRENCY**

Government would like to assure the nation that it is not considering introducing another currency in the economy as reported in some sections of the media. Out local currency is the Zimbabwe dollar (ZW$) and not cryptocurrency.

Like most countries in the world, Government of Zimbabwe through its Financial Technology (FINTECH) Group, is studying Central Banking Digital Currency (CBDC) as opposed to cryptocurrencies, bitcoins or any form of derivatives.

**I THANK YOU.**