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**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

UPDATE ON CYCLONE IDAI DISASTER

**THE MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, PUBLIC WORKS AND NATIONAL HOUSING (HON. J. MOYO**): Thank you Mr. President. Hon. Senators, I want to inform this august House about the situation in Manicaland, particularly in Chimanimani area where Cyclone Idai has devastated our people and left a lot of them buried under rubbles of mud slides as well as stones. This occurrence took place in Manicaland but has affected many other provinces including Masvingo in the districts of Zaka, Bikita and Gutu; as well as Mashonaland East in the districts of Chikomba and partly Seke. It has affected parts of Midlands in Chirumanzu. In most of the districts in Manicaland, except Makoni, we have received reports of either those who have died or infrastructure that has been extensively damaged. The President of Zimbabwe declared a national disaster after that occurrence and we have been appealing to Zimbabweans, cooperating partners as well as our neighbours in SADC to give us assistance.

The damage to infrastructure has been extensive but the damage that has occurred to individuals, families, children, adults and women has been very intense. The epicentre of that Cyclone was in Chimanimani East Constituency. I must inform this august House; as a Committee of Cabinet, we have benefited tremendously on the knowledge of that constituency from civic leaders led by the Senator of that place and the Member of Parliament Hon. Sacco from that area as well as civic leaders, councillors, chiefs, headmen and village heads. They have given us information which has assisted us in mobilising for resources as well as pinpointing areas that we need to assist. The areas that have been mostly hard hit include Ngangu which is a suburb or township of Chimanimani. Chimanimani urban itself has been affected but the most intense has been in Ngangu. The second place that was very much affected is at a place called Kopa which is near Rusitu. Rusitu itself has been affected. The third area that has been affected is a place called Chikukwa. That has been very much affected and we have lost lives there. The fourth area is a place called Machongwe. We have lost a number of people in these four areas and while the tally has been moving from 23 at the beginning to 31, 42, 64 and at present we are using the figure of 179.

The number of those who are missing is also increasing. We started with a figure below 50 and now we are at 329. This is coming as a result of information that is trickling in, as I said from civic leaders and NGOs that have gone in the area but mostly also from village heads, school heads as well as ordinary people who were able to provide that information. Unfortunately, that information at some point dried up because all communication in the area was cut off. The electricity from Chipangayi to Chipinge town was cut off and electricity from Chipinge itself into all those areas was cut off. While we had relied on people calling by cellphone and sending whastapp messages, that dried up because all their cellphones were no longer working without power. So, we have had to rely on people visiting those areas.

Visiting those areas has been hampered by the fact that all bridges in that area have been taken off one way or the other, some completely and need to be rebuilt. On some, while the bridges remain intact but all the approaches have been breached. So what was left for us to do was to hire aircraft. Initially, we had to use Air Force of Zimbabwe aircraft but they were overwhelmed by the size of the problem. We then had to mobilise individual Zimbabweans and in some cases from neighbouring countries so that we could try to drop many people to go to areas that were impassable.

Our army having realised this after reaching the highest point that was passable, decided to march on to those areas which are 40km or more to try and reach those communities. Even as I speak I know we have a difficulty in reaching some of those areas by car and we rely now on the police and army deployments that have been in those areas.

We have been able to ensure that all the clinics in the area are given medicines through these aircrafts that we are using. In some areas, we are dropping food using aircraft although they can carry small quantities. We are happy that World Food Programme has brought larger aircraft that can carry at least three tonnes each so that we can go and drop to the areas. There are 26 areas in Chimanimani that we must go and reach in order to give assistance of food, non-food items as well as medical supplies. These have been reached at least once by either aircraft or by our soldiers.

The biggest challenge at hand right now is that people are still buried under rubbles. People are buried under stones. There are stones which we do not understand how they could have reached, for instance a place called Kopa. At Kopa, there used to be a police station, agricultural extension officers and schools around but that whole place is now dissipated. What you find are only stones and mud. We do not know how deep the people are buried. From there going to Rusitu to a place called Vimba which is on the border with Mozambique, some bodies have been found by our rescue and search teams. Some bodies have been found in Mozambique and at some point the Mozambicans decided to bury the eight who they had found. Before they buried them, they decided to take pictures so that they could bring to our side for identification. Unfortunately, none of these corpses could be identified by villagers around the area that I am talking about.

This gives us the phenomena of what happens at that place called Kopa. In the Rusitu area, is a place where you find a lot of bananas. So there are a lot of traders who come to that area to trade. Whereas we are saying we identified 329 missing persons, we have been able to say a teacher, or headmaster at this school disappeared. We have not found that headmaster yet but we do not know how many members of that family were also buried. We do not know how many traders who had come to that place were buried. In addition, there are artisanal miners in that area who we believe were also buried. That can tell you why villagers in the area were not able to identify those who were brought by Mozambicans.

The rescue and search challenge is what we are faced with. Some people have said - but you have sniffer dogs in Zimbabwe. A member of our committee, Retired Air Chief Marshall Shiri can tell you more detail if you want to know. There are sniffer dogs which are trained for sniffing *mbanje* but they cannot sniff bodies. There are others which are trained for sniffing gold but they cannot sniff these bodies. So we have had to rely on support from our neighbours and today, we have received teams of sniffer dogs that are trained for identification of bodies. We want to quickly take them to that area. It is incumbent upon all of us to make sure that at least we try to reach as many bodies as we can although a lot of them will have decomposed.

We are working with the Ministry of Health and Child Care and National University of Science and Technology which helped us last time when we had a bus disaster in West Nicholson and passengers were burnt beyond recognition. We were able to identify all the 31 bodies using the DNA facilities that were at NUST. We believe we will be able to identify these if the bodies have been exhumed from under the rubble or the stones that are there.

Our challenge is now to move supplies from Mutare to areas that I have mentioned. Beyond a place called Skyline, it was absolutely impossible to go beyond that by car, let alone by anything that is carrying food supplies. We made a decision last week to say let us not keep food in Mutare. We are working with NGOs and all our food which is in Mutare is kept at World Vision warehouses. At that World Vision warehouses, working with the NGOs and military, the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare, they are the controllers there, together with the Ministry of Women’s Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises, at all the places that we have designated to handle food supplies. All the NGOs are also allowed to be in those places.

So, we decided to move food out of Mutare to a place called Machonjonya which is near Wengezi for those which we wanted to supply the areas of Nedziwa as well as Biriwiri area and Mutambara area - the areas that are nearest to the road which comes from Mutare to Tanganda. However, there is no bridge which you can cross over, so, working with DDF, we were able to open one road from Nyanyadzi going to Biriwiri. That road has been opened and I am glad to say, even the President of the National Chiefs Council was able to reach Biriwiri through that road even in his Mercedes Beinz.

On that same day, we were able to move the first tonnage which was bigger – ten tonnes so that the people in that area could have food. So the challenge of moving supplies is what we are faced with. The road from Tanganda to Chipinge was impassable – it just broke down because it became *deketa*. Buses were sinking and even human beings, if you stood on the road which is tarred, you would sink and that became our first nightmare. We are happy to say, individuals, companies and our own Zimbabwean companies got together with the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructural Development and worked over night. Within two days, they had opened a diversion which is now solid and is working. Our next challenge is, once you turn to the left at a place called Joppa, you reach a place called Silver Stream where there is the Wattle Company. That bridge or technical people call it a weir but it is a huge place – part of it had also been washed away. So when we crossed the first time, we had to cross one at a time because we were not sure that it would hold but this same team of the private sector, Government and construction companies willingly giving their own fuel, bulldozers, excavators, and their own tippers were able to go to that area also and opened it up. So you now can reach Skyline without any problem with 30 tonners. Beyond that, it is impossible.

Then, we tried to work another route from Silver Stream to a place called Peacock which is on the Nyahode River. We were successful and were able to move five to seven tonnes until the rains came again last three days. And all of a sudden, the trucks that we were sending to go and do a mapping of the Chimanimani urban area in Ngangu, got stuck with students and professors from NUST University who wanted to come and do a mapping with our physical and land planners. They were stuck for two days there. So we were not able to move any food.

The other route that we thought we could open is 2 kms. out of Chipinge and you turn left and go to a place called Paidamoyo and then on to Copa because we need to reach Copa by larger transportation system. That again during these last two days when it was raining, was very difficult. The only things that could move and we encouraged them, were those who were having 4X4 vehicles who could at least carry one tonne. When I was last there, all the Plan International and those from Eco Sure – Eco life Foundation were moving with their own four wheel drive vehicles until they got to Peacock where they got stuck.

So that is the challenge that we are having but let me assure this august House that working together with our people here in Zimbabwe, the amount of support of food, medicines and clothes is tremendous. What we were then now appealing for is food items for children and babies. When we did our inventory, we found out that there were not too many people who were actually making sure that children and babies are catered for and that has started coming after we made that appeal.

So, our people had been very responsive and companies have donated but what is significant is that it is not just companies. Individuals and those companies were able to bring their own clothes, food and even in Mutare at our Control Centre, everyday you would receive a family or somebody bringing a bag and say, these are my clothes and I think that they can help and of course, they will help. We then make sure that they are sorted out for children, for men, for women and are taken to the front.

So Members of the Senate, our appeal to all of you is that it is necessary that Zimbabweans go on the ground to see so that we do not rely on hearsay. It is better that we understand this phenomena because we have never experienced anything to that magnitude. The magnitude of us having a cyclone which we have had three or four times in the same area - this one came differently. So we are advising people to move to higher ground because you think that in the valleys or in the wetlands or in the waterways, this is what is going to happen. So some of them moved to higher ground, but it is that higher ground which gave in. The 39 children who were taken from one school, their headmaster and three teachers I might add because it was 11 o’clock in the evening, maybe whole families had moved to higher ground but that higher ground was swept and it is the one which is now sitting at Copa which is now populated by stones and mud rather than houses.

So, our warnings came to nothing because we never anticipated the amount of earth and stones that was going to be moved by this cyclone. This gives us an insight of what we have to do for the future as a country and as a people. What do we do with settlement patterns? Can we redesign a settlement pattern that assures us that in a place like Chipinge, which only recently had a tremor of the size of 5.7 on the Richter scale and by any means that is very high? And, if it has another tremor as scientists now believe that maybe there was a small tremor two hours before this cyclone hit Chimanimani, that settlement pattern now has to change.

Certainly, when the President went to Ngangu and when our teams went to Ngangu, which included Hon. Shiri, the people in Ngangu are saying move us from here, but where do we move them to. That is the planning that we have now to think in terms of going forward.

Infrastructure of agriculture has been damaged. We have been given extensive damage that has happened in agriculture. Infrastructure in relationship to horticulture for instance, as you know, this is where we have Macadamia nuts and most of our tea and all that has been damaged. The infrastructure of small scale vendors and others has been destroyed. So, to bring livelihoods to our people has become now the focus of where we need to go.

Yes, in a situation like this, we need all the wisdom and sometime after the fact, all of us have become wiser and we need input from everyone so that we can plan better and we can move better. But, let us focus on restoring infrastructure of roads and livelihoods, including agriculture. Let us focus on re-planning so that we have sustainable settlement patterns. Let us all focus on ensuring that our people, when they are told to be alert, they should be alert because the consequences are very serious. Mr. President, I can go on and on but it is better that I listen to Members so that I take note of important issues to consider. I thank you.

**HON. SEN. NCUBE:** I would like to thank the Minister for the Ministerial Statement on the issue of Cyclone Idai. I want to ask the Minister about what we saw in the newspapers that the donations have been diverted. Is it true Hon. Minister?

**HON. J. MOYO:** Mr. President, what we have advised our people is that this cyclone requires that Zimbabweans work together. In working together, I have already said, anybody who has a transport system and going to that area or dares to go to that area should surely carry something. Unfortunately, if people end up carrying something with a car written ZANU PF, then it becomes a grabbing issue. We have been working, for instance with the former mayor of Mutare City Council, Brian James. He is a well-known member of the MDC. He has carried things from us. We have sat with him in our command centre. He is now at one of our forward depots called Mwengezi including his wife. We have people like that and that has not been an issue.

Unfortunately, as I said, these comrades went to Chipinge and they were going to use that road which I said has been opened up to go to Kopa and the others were going to Peacock. Those are the areas where we have not reached. Like we had said to the NGOs and I was there myself when the NGOs were getting food to take to people who were at one of the 26 centres. They were told at Chipinge; you are going to that area, can you carry these. Once they did that, for a lot of people because the vehicle is written ZANU PF, you have already grabbed.

I assure you that we do not allow any political interference in the distribution of food. I have already said that the Senator is a member of a political party. Hon. Sacco is the Member of Parliament and without him, this relief effort would have been impossible. We applauded them. I went to the Lower House and I said Members of Parliament, what Hon. Sacco has demonstrated to us by his knowledge of the area he represents is what we require of our people who are representatives of the people. At this hour of need, we need this leadership to go and console the people in the areas where they can be reached. We have said nobody from now onwards takes any food even though we have pressure.

So, let us not go beyond what has happened as if food has been taken from a large quantity to areas of that nature. Our message is yes, it might have happened but it was well meant. The officers who wanted to do this knew there was pressure but we had already given instructions that nobody carries food when they are identifying themselves as a political party. Unfortunately, the cars they were using where of a political party. I thank you.

**HON. SEN. KHUPE:** I just want to publicly commend the Hon. Minister J. Moyo for giving us updates on a continual basis since we were affected as a nation by this calamity. I remember for the last 10 or so days, he has been in the media giving us updates as a Government Minister and that is what we want. If we are kept informed, it kills rumour and negative information about the situation. Hon. Moyo, I want to conclude by saying keep it up but on the other side unfortunately, we are not going to know perhaps as disabled people, how many disabled people perished because of this cyclone. If ever by any chance you have that data, please let us know. Thank you.

**HON. SEN. SHOKO:** Mr. President, the situation that befell us is a terrible situation but I would also want to hear from the Minister on two issues. The first issue is he has only talked about Chipinge and Chimanimani but we understand that part of Masvingo was affected, especially Bikita. We want to know what is happening there. We have also seen in the media that there are a lot of countries that have come forward to donate things, cash or whatever. Is it possible for the Minister to honour the honourable House by giving us statistics of the donations that have been given towards the disaster that happened in these areas? I thank you.

**HON. SEN. MAVETERA:**  I think this is one of the darkest hours in our country and with such disasters, people may speculate but it has got no formula because no one was ever trained and we are not geographically in the area where we could probably imagine such a disaster befalling us, especially a disaster of that magnitude. I want to ask the Minister because at the moment we are at a loss to know how many of our citizenry were affected by this cyclone but we know we have got census statistics. These could give us a rough idea of how many people were living in those areas and how many so far have been rescued and probably give us the magnitude of what has happened because at the moment, we suspect this could be just a tip of the iceberg from what we are witnessing. There is much more to it.

The second issue is we understand from the newspaper the sterling work being done by our Defence Forces but we want to know how many aircrafts does the Defence Forces have because from what we heard, it was like we had one helicopter from the Air Force of Zimbabwe and a few others. Did we make attempts to probably ask our neighbours to assist with aircrafts during this period? Thank you Mr. President.

**\*HON. SEN. CHIRONGOMA:** Thank you Mr. President. Allow me to thank the Minister of Local Government, Minister of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing and the leaders; we have seen them on television. The work that they are doing is very strenuous. What has befallen us is a first of its kind and it has really touched us but the way you ran around Minister with your team and also taking the President to see what had happened showed that you have people at heart.

We want to thank you Minister for the way you really articulated all those places without even reading anywhere. It shows that this Minister did his work whole heartedly with the other Ministers as well and the Government of Zimbabwe. We are proud of you, keep up the good work. We know the work that is ahead of you is very huge. I think just remain focused, do not listen to what people are saying until all the people of Zimbabwe have rested well. As Members of the Senate, we want you to give us guidance that as the Senate, how can we contribute. We also want to thank you for what you have said that as the Senate, we should go there and have first hand information, we want to thank you Minister.

**\*HON. SEN. CHIEF CHARUMBIRA:** Thank you Mr. President. I have been to those places; not all of them because the other areas are inaccessible. What I saw here from the Senators, I want to thank you for what you have done. When the Minister was presenting, I have seen that all of us were united and we appreciated this good thing. I think Zimbabweans should see that we are united on this issue and it is very important for our country. I would not repeat thanking the Minister and Hon. Shiri; they are stars in our midst. You have lifted up your profiles. I think because of this, you are building up your profiles. What is important is communication. What lacks when it comes to leadership is communication. The way that you are giving out information including the Minister of Communication exhibits good administration and good management. You should tell the people the truth and I want to compliment you on that.

This issue before us is very difficult because no one knew about it. Someone said to me the prophests that we have, why did they not tell us. How do they prophesy when they cannot see that people are dying? The issue is that the prophets we have, their capacity is now questionable. Us as Chiefs, people are calling us. As I was coming here, I stopped my car and somebody approached me and said Chief Charumbira, I want to talk to you about what happened. You as Chiefs - he said he is a prophet. – He said as chiefs, you were supposed to do this. He came up with all sorts of philosophies and theories Chimanimani has brought new theories about Zimbabwe.

When I was with Chief Mapa, someone approached us with a piece of paper and he said what he was seeing is, this is what we are supposed to do. What I am saying is all of us here were caught unaware but thinkers have been raised up in our midst but at the end of the day, we need unity. Like on Friday, there were three donations; the Minister came out and the whole day there were queues from Bulawayo, Harare, all over the country, people donating. We are so grateful for that. I want to thank you. We should unite on everything so that our country moves forward. Thank you.

**\*HON. SEN. HUNGWE:** Thank you Mr. President. I would not say a lot because what has happened in this House is so amazing. I want to say, what the Minister has said concerning this cyclone Idai which killed a lot of people and others are still missing; the way that he articulated it, was it not better if ZBC was here so that people would see the Minister telling the nation what has befallen our nation and encouraging that all of us should go there and see.

In my view, people like us from the Senate, I think we should make an agreement that we should come together as Senators and do something which shows that it has come from the Senate House. I went there and I saw how people were giving assistance. I do not know where they got the goods from. Some were coming with small items like beans and people would say look for somewhere to pour them. That spirit which shows that they are relatives; my friends who are missing; that is what the Minister is saying. I think as Senators, we should also go upfront. All of us here are representing people in our constituencies. We were chosen by people because of the work we are doing in our communities. I think we should come together and ask the President or Chief Charumbira that we should come together on a date to be agreed upon so that we talk on this issue as Senators of Zimbabwe.

In conclusion, I would like to say that Mr. President and Minister, I have seen what you were doing and it really touched my heart. Like the rest of the people, I went back to my rural home and I talked to people and they brought a lot of items and I was shocked where they got all those items from. They all wanted those items to be taken to those affected areas but my worry was how they were going to cook the food because I did not see any pots there; even water buckets or cooking sticks. I was just thinking by myself that even if we saw the Minister since we were far away from him, we would hear that there were goods being received and we noticed people moving around with bales of clothes but I did not see any pots there. I do not know how they were going to prepare the food. If there was no electricity and firewood; were there enough match sticks even the firewood was wet. If the firewood is wet and it is difficult to catch fire but I am just saying, Hon. Minister, you saw more on the ground than we were able to see. Finally, Mr. President, on your behalf and our own behalf, we must thank the Minister and his team. I thank you.

\***HON. SEN. FEMAI:** Thank you Mr. President. The elderly say, *chakanaka chakanaka mukaka haurungwe (*what is good should not be spoiled). If we pray in this House, when you say, ‘let us pray,’ I have not seen anyone continue closing their eyes because of their party affiliation or anyone who deliberately open their eyes for the reason of party affiliations. We all close our eyes because we want to be with God.

What happened shows that it is godly, Zimbabwe is one. I want to thank you immensely Hon. Minister. No one would come here to lie to the nation concerning what you have told us in this House as we listened quietly; it is not possible. You spoke of things that were so touching and we were left with the feeling of what happened – [HON. SENATORS: *Hear, hear.*] – I come from Chimanimani and the places that were referred to by the Hon. Minister, I knew that he was speaking the truth because I know all these places since that is where I grew up from and went to school. The road that was said to have been diverted passes through my homestead as it connects to Biriri. I want to thank you Hon. Minister, and you should not look at my face as Femai but as a Zimbabwean – [HON. SENATORS: *Hear, hear.*] - You showed us the way of leadership.

I want to thank Hon. Minister Shiri whom I saw whilst I was seated eating sadza in Mutare. He came in and I stood up without noticing him as he was dressed for work, that of rescuing people – [HON. SENATORS: *Hear, hear.*] – When I came back, I spoke to the Chief and said that, if only could get four of such Ministers – [HON. SENATORS: *Hear, hear.*] – I said if we could get only four without adding more, then our country will be Zimbabwe again – [HON. SENATORS: *Hear, hear.*] – So, I want to thank you Hon. Minister and urge you to continue like that. You carried out your work without discriminating against race or political party. Of course, there are others who say they are being led by you and yet they do their own things; that happends on both sides of the House and it is something which is inherent within the human race. However, you showed that you wanted a good thing to prevail, and we thank you so much.

**THE HON. DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF SENATE:** Before I give the Hon. Minister to respond to the queries which have been raised, I would like to advise the Hon. Senators because we were on recess. The Speaker of the National Assembly issued a statement on what Members of Parliament, both from the National Assembly and Senate can do in terms of contributions to this calamity which has befallen us. There is a biller code to which you can send your money. We will avail the details before you leave today, as well as some bins which have been placed around Parliament where you can deposit any effects which you want carried to the area which is under distress.

**HON. J. MOYO:** Thank you Mr. President. I want to thank you so much. I will not be able to repeat most of the comments because they spoke better than I did. Let me just answer where there are queries by Hon. Sen. Ncube.

The issues of grabbing, I have already spoken concerning that. On disaggregated data, on a daily basis, we are open for the receiving of goods here in Harare. If you go to the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing, there is a 24-hour service where we receive these goods.

The storage facilities were difficult and we have decided to store them at Manyame Air Base because there are many countries sending us goods. It is better for us to store them there and move them either to Manicaland or as I will indicate from another questioner to all other places here in Zimbabwe affected by Cyclone Idai. In Manicaland, at the Provincial Administrator’s Office, there are people who are there throughout and also at the World Vision, we have people whose work is just to receive. They will not be combined with those who dispatch. So, when I get a daily brief like this one, I get the received and a separate one of dispatched because at the end of the day, we require that all these be done in a transparent way.

The same happens at the forwarding depots which I have mentioned. At Wengezi, Chipinge and Silver Stream, there are those who receive and those who dispatch. When we get to the 26 places that I have mentioned where we are now distributing, we also require that separation of saying, you have received so much, you have distributed to so and so. This is because most families need assistance and if we do not write down, another person will come for the second time and receive when others are still waiting. During this time when we are not able to move enough, it is very good for us to keep records so that we do not repeat whilst other families or individuals are still waiting.

The question that was given by Hon. Sen. Shoko on other provinces, as I said in Zaka, Bikita, Gutu, we are sending goods there from here in Harare. When we receive, for instance the consignment we received from United Arab Emirates, it is of drugs, shelter and food – because of the houses destroyed, in Buhera for instance have the statistics of each of the areas and so, we need to send tentages that were brought in and we will record that. So, all the districts which have been affected, we are sending something from Harare or if need be, from Mutare but we do not encourage that. We have designated Mutare for Chipinge, Chimanimani, Buhera, Mutasa and Nyanga as well as Mutare urban and rural. Those are the areas where we are designating and sending things to. Yes, all the people that were affected are receiving. The statistics about donations, it is a daily thing and at an appropriate time if this House wishes, we will come when we think that things have stabilised and we can give a report about donations. What we have said is that all cash donations shall be through the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development. They have a special account which has been opened by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development.

Even us, when we want to use cash, we go to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, but the Ministry of Finance has also allowed temporary deposit accounts for quick disposal in all the districts that I have mentioned including the PA’s office in Manicaland and the DA’s office in Chimanimani, Chipinge and all the other districts. This is for quick disposal. For instance the burials, if you looked at our statistics, we say 179 have died and our official says they buried 102. You might start thinking what has happened to the others who were not buried. It is because in their accounting, you only give to somebody who has brought a birth certificate. But, this is your normal disaster and this other disaster once we saw them doing this, we said please give to anybody who is burying.

So, all the 179 are buried and they have been given that $1 000 and that $1 000 has to go through temporary deposit accounts. We have allowed those temporary deposits accounts also to receive money and on a weekly basis for instance, Air Chief Marshall Shiri and the Minister of Defence, we were in Mutare on Saturday until 11.30 in the evening. Part of what we wanted to receive, just to give ourselves an idea, is the accounts of everything that has been used in Manicaland. We got the accounts and we were very happy that we have officers who are able to do this even when they are working under pressure. That has been happening and so we have statistics about what has been going on in every district in the country that has been hit by this cyclone.

As to how many were attended to, how many were rescued, how many helicopters and what about our neighbours, I said at the beginning it is very difficult although through the Ministry of Social Welfare and the Ministry of Education, we have set up psycho-social counselling centres everywhere because the aftermath of this trauma is horrific to individuals and families. So, we have set this up but we cannot say we have attended to all because we still do not know the numbers. We do not know the numbers that have actually died. We only account for those we have seen. We do not know those who have been displaced, we only count those who have been reported to us.

So as for the numbers, it is an ongoing process. How many have been rescued, the rescue is in a different manner. We evacuated everybody who was seriously injured by helicopter to Chipinge and to Mutambara Hospitals because we had restocked those hospitals. Some were evacuated to Mutare. There were only 53 who we thought were severe in terms of injuries. Some who were released, we found out that we had ignored the fact of counselling and the fact of transportation to their homes. Some of them, their homes were impassable and so, we had to set up again how to deal with people who were translocated to hospitals, released and to where. We had to do that and so these psycho-social counseling centres have been set everywhere. We have asked cooperating partners, churches and others who can counsel.

Chief Charumbira has talked about his presence there. From Day 1, Chief Chiduku and Chief Makumbe were there representing the chieftainships in Manicaland. You could see them counselling us before they even thought of moving outside because they could detect the stress of the Ministers and officiate who were there. They sat there quietly. I remember one time and Chief Charumbira was there, we were trying to encourage one NGO to say we appreciate your work but work through us. They said you are not grassroots and I said with due respect madam, grassroots means a village head, a headman and a chief.

Those are in our Constitution and are considered as communities. These communities you are working with, we are trying to deliver food and medicine through them and that is why you see these chiefs sitting here and quietly listening to what you are saying; can you check with them what a community looks like so that we can all work through to those communities? You could see that the chiefs were actually trying to counsel not just us, but those NGOs also who are working because some of them have no clear understanding of the difficulties that we are faced with.

As to how many helicopters, I can tell you, as I said at the beginning that the helicopters that were put to our disposal by the Air Force helped us a lot, but we ended up having helicopters that came from other Zimbabweans. Executive Air here, although they did not have the helicopters, they had planes which were there but because we could not use them, the old man who looked older than me ended up working with Air Commodore Chiganze to make sure that the planes were going in and out and you could see them working together, but this comes from Executive Air here at Charles Prince.

So, this is the amount of assistance that we were getting and from our neighbouring countries, we have helicopters that are there. There are helicopters that came from South Africa. As Zimbabweans, we must also be cognisant of the fact that the situation in Mozambique is even worse and the Air Force of South Africa, even when we discussed; can we ask them, you feel you are being unfair. The Air Force of South Africa is doing a lot of work in Mozambique and even with this situation, we are still better off than Mozambique. So, we have asked but we got private people donating and bringing their aircraft to this country and they are still working. When we left, there were 12 to 14 helicopters. The only problem was that our helicopters were small and could not carry the type of food that was needed.

The rest and let me just thank you for all your comments. Hon. Sen. Chirongoma, Hon. Sen. Chief Charumbira and all the input that you have put to us, Hon. Sen. Hungwe and Hon. Sen. Femai. I can only say as the Senate, if you lead the people will appreciate. When they see you at your age, they feel that this is a caring Zimbabwe. Sometimes when they see you from the Lower House and I do not mean any harm, they think they are coming to politic. At your age, they think you are coming to commensurate with them. I thank you.

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