

TWENTY-FIFTH POST-CABINET PRESS BRIEFING

16TH AUGUST, 2022

1.0 **ZIMBABWE'S RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, AND
REPORT ON THE PROCUREMENT AND ROLL OUT OF VACCINES**

Cabinet received an update on the Country's Response to the Covid-19 Pandemic, and a Report on the Procurement and Roll-Out of Vaccines, as presented by the Chairman of the National COVID-19 Inter-Ministerial Committee, Vice President and Minister of Health and Child Care, Honourable General (Rtd.) Dr. C.G.D.N. Chiwenga.

The nation is being informed that since the outbreak of COVID-19 in 2020, **the country's cumulative COVID-19** cases stood at 256 561 as at 15th August, 2022, with 250 733 recoveries and 5 588 deaths. The recovery rate was 98%, with 240 active cases. The overall number of new COVID-19 cases continued to decrease, with 57 cases being recorded, compared to the 105 recorded the previous week, marking a 46% decline. An average of 8 new cases were reported per day, compared to 15 the previous week. A total of 13 new admissions were recorded during the week, thereby reflecting a zero percent change from the previous week.

Cabinet notes that the pandemic continues to be brought under control in most provinces, with only Midlands Province recording a slight increase in

new cases over the past 14 days. However, two (2) patients were admitted for intensive care at Parirenyatwa Group of Hospitals in Harare.

Regarding the national vaccination programme, Cabinet wishes to inform the nation that, as at 15th August, 2022, a total of 6 390 545 first doses of the COVID-19 vaccine had been administered, while 4 752 575 people had received the second dose, and 959 909 the third dose. Routine vaccination activities are continuing at all health facilities. The public is encouraged to get vaccinated as we have enough vaccines in the country.

Regarding the Monkeypox global outbreak, Cabinet advises that according to the World Health Organisation (WHO) global epidemiological situation report of 11th August 2022, a total of 32 960 cases and 12 deaths have been reported from 91 countries since May 2022. Transmission continues to increase in countries that have not previously reported Monkeypox cases. However, the highest number of cases continues to be reported from countries in the European Region. Once again, Cabinet advises the nation that no cases of Monkeypox have been recorded in Zimbabwe. The country, nonetheless, remains vigilant for any cases of the disease by continuing to strengthen surveillance and information dissemination.

Noting the significant decrease in COVID-19 cases Cabinet resolved as follows:

- a) that those who have been fully vaccinated with the of the World Health Organisation (WHO) recommended vaccines are now exempted from

mandatory wearing of face masks in outdoor public places but should however wear face masks in indoor public places and on public transport. Those who are fully vaccinated should carry their vaccination cards all the time;

- b) that all provinces should continue intensifying COVID-19 vaccination activities in order for the nation to achieve herd immunity; and
- c) that the country should remain on high alert for other outbreaks, such as the current Measles, regional Poliomyelitis and the global Monkeypox outbreaks.

2.0 BRIEF TO CABINET ON MEASLES OUTBREAK ACROSS THE TEN PROVINCES IN ZIMBABWE

On another health matter, Cabinet received a brief on the Measles Outbreak across all provinces of Zimbabwe as presented by the Vice President and Minister of Health and Child Care, Honourable General (Rtd.) Dr. C.G.D.N. Chiwenga.

The nation is being informed that following a report of the first case of measles in Mutasa District, Manicaland Province on 10th August 2022, the disease has now spread to other provinces. As of 15th August 2022, the cumulative figures from across the country has risen to 2 056 cases and 157 deaths. The distribution by province is as follows:

Manicaland, 1 270 cases and 122 deaths;
Harare Metropolitan 121 cases and 0 deaths;
Midlands, 83 cases and 16 deaths;
Masvingo, 116 cases and 3 deaths;
Mashonaland East ,115 cases and 16 deaths;
Mashonaland Central, 87 cases and 0 deaths;
Mashonaland West, 130 cases and 0 deaths;
Matabeleland North, 85 and 0 deaths;
Matabeleland South, 23 cases and 0 deaths; and
Bulawayo Metropoliotan, 12 cases and 0 deaths

It has been noted that all the victims had not received vaccination for protection against measles. Government has invoked Civil Protection Unit Act to deal with the emergency, and the Ministry of Health and Child Care is on the ground carrying out an intensive vaccination programme. Cabinet has also directed the Ministry of Health and Child Care to engage Traditional and Faith leaders for their support on the vaccination programme.

Cabinet resolved as follows:

- a) that the National Supplementary Vaccination Programme be up-scaled before schools open for the third term of 2022 targeting the 6 to 15 year age group; and

b) that resources towards fighting the outbreak be drawn from the National Disaster Fund in the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development.

3.0 REPORT ON THE EXUMATION OF CYCLONE IDAI VICTIMS, BURIED IN MOZAMBIQUE

Cabinet received a report on the Exhumation of Cyclone Idai victims who were temporarily buried in the Dombe, Sussundenga and Moussorize, and Espungabeira districts of Mozambique as presented by the Minister of Local Government and Public Works, Honourable July Moyo.

The nation is being informed that following a Cabinet decision to exhume bodies of victims of Cyclone Idai that were swept to Mozambique through the Rusitu River, a team comprising pathologists, the Zimbabwe Republic Police forensic officials, the Zimbabwe National Army and the Civil Registry was set up to carry out the exhumations. The team, assisted by the Zimbabwean Ambassador to Mozambique Ambassador Matemata, held consultations with Mozambican officials and traditional leadership before carrying out a total of 31 exhumations. The Traditional Leadership and the grave diggers were paid tokens of appreciation for assisting in the burial of the victims.

An arrangement was made with Chimoio Provincial Hospital for the storage of the remains of the victims. DNA tests will be carried out in Zimbabwe

by the National University of Science and Technology's Applied Genetic Testing Centre in collaboration with the AiBST Laboratory. The two laboratories have already collected reference samples from the families who lost their loved ones during the disaster. Government has made arrangements for the remains to be transported and stored in Zimbabwe prior to the release of DNA results.

The nation is further advised that Cabinet resolved as follows:

- a) to declare the missing persons dead so as to facilitate acquisition of the relevant documentation at the Civil Registry Department and the subsequent registration of the deceased persons estates;
- b) that all positively identified remains be conveyed to Mutare General Hospital in order to reduce costs for the grieving families;
- c) that a mopping-up exercise be undertaken to identify burial sites and conduct exhumations on the other side of the Rusitu River; and
- d) that State-assisted burials be provided to the bereaved families.

4.0 REPORTS ON THE 2ND 100-DAY CYCLE PRIORITY PROJECTS

Cabinet received reports on progress made in the implementation of priority projects for the 2nd 100-Day Cycle of 2022, as presented by the Ministers of

Local Government and Public Works; Primary and Secondary Education; and Public Service , Labour and Social Welfare.

1. The Minister of Local Government and Public Works, Honourable J.G. Moyo, reported that progress had been recorded on the projects under his purview as follows:

- Construction of the Hwedza Government Offices in Wedza District, Mashonaland East Province, is at 90% complete;
- Construction of the Siakobvu Government Offices in Kariba District, Mashonaland West Province, stands at 76.9% complete;
- Construction of the National Disaster Management Centre in Harare Metropolitan Province is at 85.5% complete;
- Construction of seven houses under the Tsholotsho Disaster Recovery Project in Tsholotsho District, Matabeleland North Province is 93% complete;
- The Binga Reconstruction Project in Binga District, Matabeleland North Province is 75% complete;
- Progress in health sector projects is as follows: Petronella Clinic in Mwenezi District, Masvingo Province, 85% ; Magadzire Clinic, in Mutasa District, Manicaland Province, 85% complete; Langton Clinic Block in Zibagwe District, Midlands Province, 75% complete; the Nswazi Clinic Mothers Home in Umzingwane District, Matabeleland South Province is 70% complete; and Chimanimani Rural Hospital rehabilitation in Chimanimani District, Manicaland Province, 75%;

- Progress in education sector projects comprises: construction of Nyangambe Primary School classroom block in Mwenezi District , Masvingo Province is at 62% complete; construction of 2 staff houses at Kanyimo Secondary in Nyanga District, Manicaland Province stands at 30% complete; the ECD block in Chiredzi Town Council, Masvingo Province is 80% complete; Ndorwe Primary School block in Zaka District, Masvingo Province is 90% complete; and Mkushi Secondary School in Zaka District in Masvingo Province is 40% complete;

In the roads sector, the Minister highlighted progress as follows:

- widening and resealing of Nyika Growth Point roads, Bikita District, Masvingo Province is 50% complete;
- rehabilitation of the gravel road (Chakari Blackmorevale) in Sanyati District in Mashonaland West Province stands at 95% complete;
- Rushinga Rural Service culverts in Rushinga District , Mashonaland Central Province is 60% complete; and
- rehabilitation of the Nhakiwa-Manyika Road in Uzumba-Maramba Pfungwe District, Mashonaland East Province is 80% complete.

In the water and sanitation sector, the Minister highlighted progress as follows:

- 4km sewer network rehabilitation in Chegutu High Density suburb in Chegutu, Mashonaland West Province is 95% complete;

- rehabilitation of 4km of water network in Pfupajena high density suburb in Chegutu, Mashonaland West Province is 90% complete.

2. The Minister of Primary and Secondary School, Honourable E. Ndlovu, reported on progress recorded for projects under her purview as follows:

- thirty-three schools of the targeted forty schools were registered countrywide;
- five video lessons in Zimbabwe National Sign language were produced;
- three classroom blocks at St Johns Baptist Secondary School in Mutare, Manicaland Province, were completed;
- construction of low-cost boarding facilities at Bayethe Secondary School in Umzingwane District, Matabeleland South Province; and Checheche High School in Chipinge District, Manicaland Province has reached 80%;
- three schools namely Dandawa High in Hurungwe District, Mashonaland West; Kundayi Secondary in Mazowe District, Mashonaland Central Province; and Maramba High in Uzumba-Maramba-Pfungwe District in Mashonaland East Province have benefitted from the conversion of classrooms to laboratories, and all the construction levels are above 70%.

3. The Minister of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare, Honourable Prof Paul Mavima, outlined the following progress for projects being implemented in his sector:

- the successful reintegration of youth survivors of drug and substance abuse back to their communities
- the capacitation of eighty-seven caregivers from Mashonaland West Province to provide information and skills in caring for survivors of drug and substance abuse;
- the training of a total of 91 persons with disabilities on Project Management at Nerutanga and Chiwenga centres in Buhera District, Manicaland Province; and
- Six solar powered boreholes fitted with 5 000 litre-tanks were drilled in Bulawayo, Chivhu, Masvingo, Chegutu, Murambinda and Kwekwe, with more than 700 traders set to benefit from these boreholes.

5.0 ALLEGED NEGATIVE COMMENTS BY THE SOUTH AFRICAN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS MINISTER

Cabinet noted with concern unfounded reports by a local daily publication attributing some comments to the Minister of International Relations in South Africa, Honourable Naledi Pandor. Government wishes to assure the nation that Zimbabwe enjoys excellent fraternal relations with the Republic of South Africa. The statements attributed to the Honourable Minister are a clear fabrication. Cabinet wishes to reiterate the need for the journalistic profession to stick to the dictates

of ethical reportage as we build our country towards the attainment of Vision 2030. It is noted that Honourable Naledi Pandor is a great Pan-Africanist and a consummate diplomat who has demonstrated respect for sovereign decisions for other nations

I THANK YOU!