

PRESS BRIEFING 2ND REPUBLIC, SESSION II , 9TH MEETING
21 NOVEMBER 2023

1.0 UPDATE ON THE SUMMER AND WINTER CROPS MARKETING

The Minister of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development, Honourable Dr Anxious Masuka, presented the Update on the Summer and Winter Crops Marketing, which was adopted by Cabinet.

Cabinet wishes to inform the nation that the Grain Marketing Board Stocks as at 19/11/23 for maize and traditional grains stood at 194 429 metric tonnes and 47 477 metric tonnes respectively. Wheat stocks of 231 776 metric tonnes as at 19 November, 2023 will last eleven months at a monthly drawdown rate of 21 000 metric tonnes. The monthly consumption for grains is now estimated at 23 000 MT comprising 20 000MT maize for Millers, and 3 000MT sorghum for stock feed manufacturers.

Regarding the summer crops marketing update, the nation is informed that the GMB intake was 39% market share of all the marketed crops with 47% share of maize; 7.3% of soya bean; 41% of sunflower and 64% of traditional grains. Government is expediting the settlement of outstanding payments due to farmers.

Pertaining to Winter Wheat, a record 90 192 hectares were planted, with 89 932ha harvested to date, yielding 467 333MT at an average yield of 5.2 tonnes per hectares which is another record achieved under the 2nd Republic.

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2.0 UPDATE ON PREPARATIONS FOR THE 2023/2024 SUMMER SEASON

Cabinet considered and noted the Update on the Preparations for the 2023/2024 Summer Season which was presented by the Minister of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development, Honourable Dr. A.J. Masuka.

The nation is informed that preparations for the 2023/2024 Summer Season are well on course. Over 1.9 million farmers have so far been trained under the Climate-Proofed Presidential Inputs *Pfumvudza/Intwasa* Supply Scheme, while 7.6 million plots have already been prepared. Farmers have generally responded positively to climate-proofing interventions for El Nino.

There is adequate fertiliser for the Presidential Programme and other schemes. Other farmers can now import fertiliser for own use following approval by government.

Meanwhile, dryland tobacco planting has slowed down because of the late rains. 40 contractors have registered for tobacco production, with the total indicative area contracted at 148 000 hectares. To date, a total of 31 681 hectares of tobacco have been planted, representing a 4.6% increase above last year during the same period.

Pertaining to cotton, Cabinet wishes to advise the public that a total of 11 contractors have indicated their intention to contract farmers this season while nine contractors have contracted growers. The Agricultural Marketing Authority has completed the induction of Common Input Distribution Point Clerks across the country. The targeted production is 271 286 hectares by 400 786 farmers with an estimated volume of 130-140 000 MT. Presidential Climate-Proofed *Pfumvudza/Intwasa* Cotton Programme and inputs distribution will utilize established GMB channels and Committees at ward level with the usual Ward Committees. A monitoring system through AGRITEX has been introduced to monitor Pfumvudza/Intwasa from planting through to marketing.

3.0 UPDATE ON THE CHOLERA OUTBREAK RESPONSE

Cabinet received an update on the cholera outbreak as presented by the Minister of Health and Child Care, Honourable Dr. Douglas Mombeshora.

During the period 9 November, 2023 to 15 November, 2023 there were 1 259 new suspected cholera cases reported compared to 437 reported the previous week. Goromonzi, Mudzi, Mutasa and Mutoko are the new districts that reported cases during this period. The highest number of cholera cases during this period were from Harare (323); Chitungwiza (206) and Buhera (68).

In response to the cholera challenges, deliveries of procured medicines and commodities to Natpharm started on the 7th of November 2023 and redistribution to provinces and districts had already commenced. Regarding water and sanitation, point of use water treatment chemicals are being distributed in the affected households.

Cabinet has reiterated as follows:

- a) that intensified Risk Communication and Community engagement including involvement of religious and local leadership, intensified and school health education on cholera and other diseases be intensified, and utilization of existing media houses and digital platforms for content dissemination be continued;
- b) that there be improved safe water access to communities through rehabilitation of boreholes and drilling of new ones;
- c) that public health measures be enforced in all communities reporting cholera cases, including restrictions of gatherings in all cholera affected areas, and supervision of all burials in all cholera affected areas;
- d) that vending be restricted to designated areas only; and
- e) that since Harare City Council is failing to provide water and sanitation facilities, Government is intervening including in the maintenance of Harare City Council Water Browsers; and
- f) that the Ministry of Health and Child Care should intensify the monitoring of all provinces.

4.0 REPORT ON THE 3RD 100-DAY CYCLE PROJECTS OF 2023

Cabinet received reports on progress made in the implementation of priority projects for the 3rd 100-Day Cycle of 2023, as presented by the Ministers of Tourism and Hospitality Industry; Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development; and Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Honourable Dr. F.Shava reported progress on projects under his purview as follows:

- i. the refurbishment of Ambassador's Residence in Abuja, Nigeria is at 15% complete;
- ii. the refurbishment of Ambassador's Residence in Berlin, Germany is at 78% complete;
- iii. the refurbishment of Ambassador's Residence in London, Britain is 85% complete; and
- iv. the refurbishment of Chanceries and Consulates is at various stages of completion as follows: Pretoria, South Africa, 100%; Maputo, Mozambique, 95%; Beira, Mozambique, 98%; and Abuja, Nigeria, 20%.

The Minister of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Hon. Prof. A. Murwira reported progress on projects under his Ministry's purview as follows:-

- i) establishment of a Cooking Oil Plant in Mutoko is at 65% complete;
- ii) construction of a innovation hub at Great Zimbabwe is at 100% complete;
- iii) the Mutare Teachers College Baobab Juice Project is now complete;
- iv) the Gwanda State University Mining Laboratory is at 35% complete; and
- v) establishment of Integrated Skills Expansion Outreach Programme (ISEOP 2023) is complete having trained 170 people to skilled worker class 4 level, of the targeted 140 people.

The Minister of Tourism and Hospitality Industry, Hon Barbara Rwodzi reported progress on projects under her purview as follows:-

- i) construction of tourism facilities is at 100% completion at Lenon Hotel, Mutare; Elephant Lodge, Buhera; Tamarind Lodges, Nyanga; Paradise Lodge, Chiredzi; Travellers Rest Lodge, Beitbridge; Zimbabwe Lodge, Kariba; and Water Front Resort Development Project, Kariba;
- ii) the Diana's Pools Community Based Tourism Project, Umzingwane, Matabeleland South is at 100% of completion; and
- iii) the Kore Kore Cultural Village Community Based Tourism Project in Makonde District, Mashonaland West Province is complete with equipment comprising cooking utensils and traditional artefacts for display at the cultural village having been fully procured.

5.0 REPORT BY THE FERTILISER LOCALISATION INTER-MINISTERIAL TEAM

The Minister of Industry and Commerce, Hon. Dr S.G.G. Nyoni apprised Cabinet on the localization of fertiliser production in Zimbabwe.

The nation is informed that 2023/24 summer crop preparedness indicates a total demand of fertilizer 1 422 500 tonnes, targeting 3 million households for strategic crops. It is reported that there will be a deficit of 990 317 tonnes of fertilizer for the current season. The country is reported to have 77 483 tonnes of stock and 354 700 tonnes in Collateral Management Agreement which requires US\$460 million to unlock the stocks. Cabinet advises that the local fertilizer industry has an installed annual production capacity of more than 2 million MT of compound and blends. The industry is currently operating at 30% and the supply gap is being covered by imports.

Cabinet reports that in order to alleviate the current shortage of fertilizer, the country will import through a variety of potential schemes; the Dorowa Shawa Hills Project; and Wonderful Group of Zambia Joint Venture with Rusunguko/Nkululeko Holdings. The joint venture is expected to bring in 50 000 metric tonnes of Basal fertiliser and 50 000 metric tonnes of Ammonia Nitrate.

On innovative measures for local production of unique varieties of fertilizer; Cabinet advises that there is a Coal-to-Fertiliser project which is being pursued by Verify Engineering. Sable Chemicals (Pvt) Ltd is currently exploring the option of local ammonia gas production. The company is also exploring the production of Ammonia Gas using Natural Gas sourced from Muzarabani. The processes will utilize the locally available coal to develop ammonia-based fertilisers, thereby fulfilling fertiliser requirements.

Furthermore, Sable Chemicals also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Invictus Energy which will enable the company to produce 240 000 tonnes of AN fertilizer and 360 000 tonnes of Urea. Sable is also pursuing the option of local ammonia gas production which includes the production of Green Ammonia using solar as the primary source of power.

Additionally, other innovative measures which will be used to mitigate both the increased volumes and funding requirements for fertilizers will be to use super grades of fertilizers such as Super D instead of Compound D or Urea in place of Ammonium Nitrate. A comprehensive plan of production is underway.

6.0 REPORT THE CEMENT INDUSTRY MARKET SUPPLY AND DEMAND SITUATION

The Minister of Industry and Commerce, Hon. S.G.G. Nyoni updated Cabinet on the measures being implemented to address the current cement shortage on the local market.

Cabinet advises that as at 15 November 2023, 665 applications for cement import had been approved amounting to 149 000 metric tonnes to ease cement shortages and clear backlogs that had been created on the market. Cabinet reports that of the 665 approved applications, only 332 import licences were collected. The approved applications are for manufacturers of cement, wholesalers, and retailers as well as companies in the construction industry. Furthermore, industry players have been allowed up to 31 December, 2023 to import cement using their own free funds.

The nation is further informed that there is also an Administrative arrangement with ZIMRA to allow the importation of cement amounting to maximum of 5 MT (100 bags of 50kgs cement) for personal use. The supply gap of cement is expected to decline starting December 2023. Government continues to review the current cement supply situation and will take decisive action against errant industry players. Government would also like to assure the public that it has given an ultimatum to players to review their supply and pricing models.

7.0 REPORT ON THE WORLD CHILDREN'S DAY COMMEMORATIONS WALVIS BAY, NAMIBIA: 19TH NOVEMBER 2023

The Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Hon. F. Shava reported on the World Children's Day Commemorations, held in Walvis Bay, Namibia on 19th November 2023.

The nation is informed that the Vice President, Honourable Col. (Rtd) Kembo D. Mohadi represented His Excellency the President at the 3rd Annual Sub-Regional celebrations of the World Children's Day. A delegation of ten (10) children from Zimbabwe joined their counterparts from the other three countries in participating in the event. The Sub-regional World Children's Day commemorations is an effort by the Heads of State of Zimbabwe, Namibia, Zambia and Botswana to join the global community in celebrating World Children's Day as a moment of reflecting on the global community's commitments towards the Declaration of the Children's Rights, which have since been adopted by the United Nations and individual countries, This year's commemorations were held under the theme, "Renewing our promise for Children's Rights."

Cabinet advises that the most notable concerns raised by the children from the four countries included the following:- the need for improved child participation and inclusion in the development of Government policies, systems and programmes that affect them; the need to remove gender disparities and unequal treatment of children living with disabilities; the need

for improvement of child protection systems and mechanisms; the need for investment in mental health awareness; combating online threats, such as online bullying and exposure to adult and improper content.

The nation is informed that the Hon. Vice President had appraised the meeting on the ongoing efforts by the Government of Zimbabwe to improve the protection of the rights of children.

I THANK YOU!