

# **THIRTIETH POST-CABINET PRESS BRIEFING**

**24<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2024**

## **1.0 UPDATE ON THE 2023/2024 SUMMER CROPS MARKETING, FOOD SECURITY OUTLOOK TO MARCH 2025 AND 2024 WINTER CROP PRODUCTION**

Cabinet considered the Report on the 2023/2024 Summer Crops Marketing, and Food Security Outlook to March 2025 and the 2024 Winter Cereals Plan, as presented by the Minister of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development, Honourable Dr. A.J. Masuka.

A total of 164 465 metric tonnes (mt) of grains and oilseeds had been marketed as at 20 September 2024, compared to 289 090 mt marketed in 2023 at the same time. The marginal decline in marketed maize indicates that this was largely irrigated maize whereas sorghum, soya bean and sunflower were under dryland production and suffered from the El Nino-induced drought.

Regarding maize imports by Government through the Grain Marketing Board, a total of 39 698.88 metric tonnes have been delivered out of the expected 300 000 metric tonnes. The import of grain at the current importation rate, will last till June 2025. Focus will now shift to the purchase of local wheat. Meanwhile, harvesting of wheat has commenced and 1 737 mt have already been harvested as at 18 September, 2024.

Cabinet advises that the total food requirement to March 2025 is about 427 408.54 metric tonnes at 7.5 kg per person till March 2025 and 464 608.54 metric tonnes at 8.5 kg per person. Taking into consideration the possibility of increased requirements, as only 6.2 million of 9.2 million people in rural areas are receiving food under social welfare, it is recommended that the 7.5 kg/person/month be maintained and more people be enrolled as the need arises.

Meanwhile, surveillance of the quelea bird is ongoing in all provinces. On standby are technicians with drones, vehicle-mounted sprayers and back pack sprayers. National and Provincial Command Centres have been activated.

Water availability and grazing areas continue to deteriorate on a daily basis particularly in Natural Regions IV and V. Out of the 1 035 wards in these regions, 959 rural wards are targeted for establishment of Ward Drought Mitigation Centres. Some 35 rigs have been distributed to the eight rural provinces for the emergency drilling programme on a roving basis.

Regarding the Tobacco exports, a total of 144 million kilogrammes have been exported at an average price of USD5.28 per kg. Meanwhile, in preparation for the 2024/2025 season, some 1 252 244g of seed has been sold compared to 865 708g sold last year same time, reflecting a 45% increase. The seed is equivalent to 208 707ha compared to 144 285ha last

year. A record production is anticipated, as these seed sales are a record high for the industry.

## **2.0 REPORT ON THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE 2025 INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATIONS VENUE IN MIDLANDS PROVINCE**

Cabinet received and approved the Report on the Identification of the 2025 Independence Celebrations Venue in Midlands Province, which was presented by the Minister of Local Government and Public Works, Honourable Daniel Garwe, as Acting Chairperson of the Cabinet Committee on State Occasions and National Monuments.

An assessment visit of the Midlands Province to identify suitable venues to host the 2025 Independence Celebrations as proclaimed by His Excellency the President, Cde. Dr. E.D. Mnangagwa at Murambinda during the 2024 Independence Celebrations was undertaken by a technical team of the Cabinet Committee on State Occasions and National Monuments. The Technical Team visited possible sites in three districts, namely: Nembudziya Open Space Ground, Tshoda, and Chireya Business Centre in Gokwe North District; Machakata, Cotton Marketing Board Nemangwe/Sesame and Manoti Business Centre all in Gokwe South District; and Chizungu High School, Danga/Mposi Business Centre, Chingoma High School and Mataga Growth Point Open Space, and Zvomukonde High School Grounds located in Mberengwa District. The main

objective of the visit was to identify an open space of not less than 5 hectares in size that could accommodate the National Independence Celebrations, host the Children's Party and the Independence Musical Gala. The Technical Committee also recommended places of historical significance. The nation is reminded that Mtapa Hall in Gweru, Wha Wha Prison, Connemara Prison and Sikombela Detention Camp are all in Midlands Province. It is at Mtapa Hall in 1964 where ZANU held its first congress and resolved to take up arms against the white settler regime. The late President, Cde. R.G. Mugabe and other nationalists were once detained at the notorious Wha Wha and Sikombela Detention Centres. Cabinet approved that the Independence Torch rally should pass through these areas on its way to the venue of the Independence Celebrations. In addition, the graves of heroes and heroines lying at the provincial and district heroes acres will be spruced up.

Cognisant that the Ministry of Local Government and Public Works is set to launch the Nhimbe/Ilima Road Rehabilitation Programme, the Kadoma-Sanyati-Gokwe-Nembudziya Road will be the priority project for Midlands Province. The programme involves all local authorities in a province identifying a priority road and pulling together resources to implement the project. The special project will be funded by the Zimbabwe National Roads Authority, with technical assistance being provided by the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructural Development and the Rural Infrastructure Development Agency.

Cabinet noted that hosting of the celebrations in the Midlands is continuing commitment to the mantra leaving no one and no place behind and will see massive infrastructural in the marginalised district of Midlands, and resolved as follows:

- a) that Nembudziya Open Grounds at Nembudziya Growth Point in Gokwe North District will be the venue for the 2025 National Independence Celebrations;
- b) that Nyamuroro High School will be the venue for the Children's Party;
- c) that Nembudziya High School Grounds will be the venue for the Independence Gala;
- d) that Mtapu Hall, Wha Wha Prison, Connemara Prison and Sikombela former Detention Camp will be considered as the Places of Significance in Midlands Province;
- e) that all graves of heroes and heroines at Midlands provincial and district shrines be spruced up.
- f) that Cabinet approves the implementation of the Nhimbe/Ilima Road Rehabilitation Programme, as complementary to the traditional Independence preparations and that ZINARA should fast track disbursement of fuel and other resources for the programme.

- g) that roads in the competing 3 districts be rehabilitated and upgraded and, should resources permit, other roads in the province be also considered as part of the normal programming of the 45<sup>th</sup> National Independence Celebrations; and
- h) that specifically, Kadoma-Sanyati-Nembudziya road be rehabilitated and upgraded under the Nhimbe/Ilima Road Rehabilitation Programme. This route provides the main and shortest access, that is, Harare-Nembudziya and Gweru-Nembudziya.

### **3.0 POSTAL AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS SECTOR SECOND QUARTER PERFORMANCE REPORT 2024**

Cabinet adopted the Postal and Telecommunications Sector Second Quarter Performance Report for 2024, as presented by the Minister of Information Communication Technology, Postal and Courier Services, Honourable Dr. Tatenda Mavetera.

Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) are developing at a rapid pace worldwide hence the country has to be proactive to use these technologies for its growth. The quarterly report underlines the significance of creating transparent, responsible systems that align with the country's national vision and strategic intent. Highlights of the Report include that the number of mobile subscriptions stands at 14 834 345, an increase from the 14 739 613 recorded in the first quarter. Fixed telephony maintained a

tele-density of 1.90%, while there was an increase in data and internet subscriptions.

Of particular note is that the amount of data and internet traffic on mobile devices increased by 12.5%, indicating that more online activities are relying on mobile data. The number of mobile base stations increased with the deployment of 272 Long Term Evolution (LTE) infrastructure. Econet added 31 new base stations, while NetOne decommissioned 14 2G base stations and replaced them with 4G/LTE stations. The transition of services from being voice-centric to data-centric has driven large investments in high-speed broadband infrastructure.

Cabinet advises that the quarterly reports are published nationally and reports will be presented to International Telecommunication Union annually.

**I THANK YOU!**