

## **THIRTY-SEVENTH POST-CABINET PRESS BRIEFING**

**13<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 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 Ministers' Committee on the National COVID-19 Response, Vice President and Minister of Health and Child Care, Honourable Dr. C.G.D.N. Chiwenga.

The nation is being advised that the country's cumulative cases since the outbreak of COVID-19 in 2020 stands at 259 559, with 253 487 recoveries and 5 625 cumulative deaths. The recovery rate is 98%, with 447 active cases.

Regarding the national vaccination programme, Cabinet wishes to inform the nation that a total of 6 578 742 first doses of the COVID-19 vaccine has been administered, while 4 946 829 people have received their second dose, and 1 267 483 their third dose.

Cabinet wishes to encourage the nation to continue wearing facemasks in enclosed public places. This measure is being implemented to safeguard citizens from contracting COVID-19 virus as the country is not completely out of the woods.

In light of the upcoming festive season, Cabinet resolved on the following strategies in order to ensure that the pandemic is kept under check:

- (i) strengthening enforcement and adherence to WHO COVID-19 protocols; and
- (ii) strengthening the school surveillance system in preparation for the reopening of schools in January 2023.

## **2.0 REPORT ON THE NATIONAL GRAINS STATUS, WHEAT HARVESTING AND DELIVERIES**

Cabinet received and considered the weekly Report on the National Grains Status, Wheat Harvesting and Deliveries, as presented by the Minister of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development, Honourable Dr. Anxious Jongwe Masuka.

Cabinet advises that the grain stocks at GMB as at 11 December, 2022 stood at 544 578 metric tonnes comprising 467 167 metric tonnes of maize and 77 411 metric tonnes of traditional grains. The available grain will last for 11 months at a consumption rate of 49 295 metric tonnes per month.

Wheat stocks at GMB stand at 179 218 metric tonnes, and this will provide 8.5 months' cover at a consumption rate of 21 000 metric tonnes per month. The cumulative area harvested from the 2022 winter wheat crop stands at 78 063 hectares, or 97% of the planted area. The total

production now stands at 375 131 metric tonnes of wheat at an average yield of 4.8 mt per hectare.

### **3.0 UPDATE ON PREPARATIONS FOR THE 2022/2023 SUMMER PRODUCTION SEASON**

Cabinet considered and adopted an Update on the Preparations for the 2022/2023 Summer Production Season, as presented by the Minister of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development, Honourable Dr. A.J. Masuka.

Cabinet advises the nation that the country continues to be in the normal to above-normal rainfall category, despite the reduced rainfall activity experienced during the past week. Most areas across the country have received rainfall which is expected at this time of the year.

Inputs distribution, registration and training on *Pfumvudza/Intwasa* are in progress, with distribution continuing to be done according to agro-ecological zone requirements. A total of 2 888 163 *Pfumvudza/Intwasa* farmers have been trained to date compared to 2 294 471 at the same time of the previous season. Similarly, 5 121 509 plots have been prepared compared to 2 859 714 plots at the same time of the previous season.

Cabinet highlights that 86% (68 106 metric tonnes) of the received basal fertilizer has been distributed across the provinces, while 78% (21 084 metric tonnes) of top dressing fertiliser has been distributed. Out of the

15 500 metric tonnes of the ordered maize seed, 13 189 metric tonnes has been received. Planting has commenced in many areas.

Under the National Enhanced Agricultural Productivity Scheme (NEAPS), both AFC Commercial Bank and CBZ have commenced registering farmers, with inputs being availed. The targets for support by the two financial institutions have been revised downwards. CBZ is now targeting to support a total of 60 000 hectares, with 55 000 hectares under maize and 5 000 hectares under soyabeans, while AFC Commercial Bank is targeting 30 000 hectares, comprising of maize (25 000 hectares), soyabeans (3 000 hectares), and traditional grains (2 000 hectares).

Cabinet would like to highlight the following areas planted for the major crops this year compared to same time of the previous season:

- Maize, 465 707 hectares compared to 215 481 hectares;
- Soyabeans, 7 578 hectares compared to 8 948 hectares;
- Sorghum, 59 481 hectares against 12 210 hectares;
- Cotton, 88 856 hectares compared to 13 166 hectares; and
- Tobacco, 75 758 hectares versus 64 155 hectares.

Regarding livestock, the nation is informed that the distribution of chickens and goats under the Presidential Rural Poultry and Goat Schemes is continuing. The Presidential Rural Poultry Scheme is targeting 3 million households with each getting 10 chickens over a 5- year period. Meanwhile, a total of 469 boreholes have been drilled under the Borehole Drilling Programme across the country to date.

#### **4.0 INVESTMENT PROJECTS RECOMMENDED BY THE ZIMBABWE INVESTMENT AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (ZIDA)**

Cabinet considered and approved the following Investment Projects Recommended by the Zimbabwe Investment and Development Agency (ZIDA), as presented by the Chief Facilitator in Charge of the ZIDA One Stop Shop Investment Centre, Mr Never Nyemudzo:

##### **1. The Partnership between the Zimbabwe Electricity Transmission and Distribution Company (ZETDC) and Bikita Minerals** entails the company financing the following:

- (i) construction of a 113 kilometres (km) long 132 kilo-Volt (kV) power line from the existing Tokwe substation to the proposed Bikita Minerals substation;
- (ii) construction of a new 132 KV Bikita Minerals substation;
- (iii) installation of substation ancillary services, protection equipment, metering equipment, power network control and telecommunication system; and
- (iv) reconfiguration of the new Bikita Minerals substation and network so that it supplies power to other ZETDC clients, such as Gonye, Nyika, Chivake and Bikita local load.

Bikita Minerals will recoup its investment through usage of power to be supplied by ZETDC over a 5-year period, and the electricity infrastructure will be handed over to ZETDC upon completion of the construction works.

A feasibility study of the project submitted to ZIDA confirms that the project is financially viable. Benefits of the project include the following:

- (i) the power lines and substations will allow Bikita Minerals and other ZETDC clients to access power;
- (ii) increased revenue inflows to the country as Bikita Minerals will increase output of its products;
- (iii) employment creation as 400 more people will be employed at the Bikita Minerals plant during construction and operation of the expanded plant; and
- (iv) unlocking of economic benefits to Bikita Minerals' value chain industries as the company works with them during construction and operation of the expanded mine.

## **2. The Partnership between Bulawayo City Council and Williams Engineering**

which will establish a 50 Mega-Watt (MW) photovoltaic (solar) power plant at Ncema Farm. The Partnership involves a Build-Operate-Own-and-Transfer arrangement over a concession period. The project has the following benefits, among others:

- (i) it will address the perennial power challenges at the Bulawayo water pumping station and also provide power to the City's critical installations thereby reducing the Council power bill;
- (ii) the power plant will create 200 jobs during construction and 40 jobs during its operation;
- (iii) the plant will provide dedicated power to Bulawayo industries in the designated Special Economic Zones; and
- (iv) the plant will provide an alternative revenue stream for Bulawayo City Council.

**3. The Partnership between Chirundu Border Consortium (CBC) and the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructural Development** entails a Build Own Operate and Transfer (BOOT) model for the construction of new buildings and upgrading of existing infrastructure at Chirundu Border Post, over an estimated period of 24 months. The BOOT model is premised on a "*User Pay Principle*", whereby the project sponsor (CBC) will raise finance based on the project cashflows with no recourse to public funding.

The benefits of the project include the following:

- (i) reduction in congestion and delays at the Chirundu Border Post thereby promoting regional trade;
- (ii) enhanced movement of transit traffic as the upgraded Chirundu Border Post will complement the improved efficiency at Beitbridge Border Post and along the Beitbridge-Harare-Chirundu Highway under construction by Government, thereby making it the preferred regional transit route;
- (iii) improved connectedness of Zimbabwe to the region enabling the country to more effectively tap into the benefits of the African Continental Free Trade Area; and
- (iv) employment creation, with the pre-feasibility study indicating that 200 jobs will be created during the construction phase and an estimated additional 80 jobs upon operationalisation of the upgraded modernized Border Post.

## **5.0 PROPOSAL FOR A SPECIAL PURPOSE VEHICLE FOR ACCELERATING THE ALLOCATION OF LAND TO ZIMBABWEANS**

In view of the fact that there are 260 000 people on the waiting list for land, with an estimated 10 000 in the Diaspora having indicated an interest to access land, Cabinet adopted the concept of a Special Purpose Vehicle for Accelerating the Allocation of Land to Zimbabweans, Including those in the Diaspora and Local Land Seekers, as presented by the Minister of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development, Honourable Dr. A.J. Masuka.

The model involves Government providing land to a Special Purpose Vehicle where Zimbabweans, including those in the diaspora and local will invest and be given shares. The vehicle creates a viable marketplace for land through which anyone wishing to access land can go through. This is a vehicle for empowerment, unlocking investment and land value.

The land will be obtained from the following categories:

- i. Multiple farm owners;
- ii. Abandoned land;
- iii. Derelict land; and
- iv. Underutilized land.

The vehicle will enhance land preservation, avoid large-scale villagisation, and assure national food security while simultaneously creating value addition and beneficiation, industrialisation and rural development as well as generating exports.



Cabinet notes that while significant milestones have been recorded in re-distributing land under the Land Reform Programme, demand has surged over the years, especially since the advent of the Second Republic. Indeed, the efforts have created a new crop of agricultural entrepreneurs. However, the existing schemes for availing land have become insufficient to satisfy the needs of the many registered and potential land-seekers, as well as strengthening the agricultural entrepreneurial class. The Special Purpose Vehicle will therefore provide a viable alternative for meeting this demand, and will complement conventional land access routes. The concept is being further refined and the nation will be advised of the details in due course.

## **6.0 UPDATE ON THE STATUS OF INDUSTRY**

Cabinet received and approved the Update on the Status of Industry and Commerce, as presented by the Minister of Industry and Commerce, Honourable Dr. Sekai Irene Nzenza.

The nation will recall that under the National Development Strategy 1: 2021-2025 (NDS 1), Government thrust is to promote rapid and robust industrialization under the "*Moving the Economy up the Value Chain and Structural Transformation*" Thematic Area or Pillar. The drive is on accelerating the implementation, strengthening and domestication of value chains. Priority is on developing ten value chains for rapidly transforming the economy structurally, namely: fertiliser; dairy; cotton;

soya; leather; pharmaceuticals; iron and steel; sugar; bus and truck; and plastic waste.

Cabinet advises, with satisfaction, that Zimbabwe's industrial sector remains highly diversified, comprising 94 sub-sectors which produce 6 000 products, notwithstanding the disruptive exogenous factors experienced recently, namely: COVID-19 and geo-political tensions in Eastern Europe. In order to promote sustainable industrial sector growth, Government has instituted the following initiatives, among others:

1. Capacitating the Industrial Development Corporation of Zimbabwe (IDCZ) to provide companies in the manufacturing sector with medium and long-term capital for industrial upgrading, modernisation and innovation. To date, the Z\$24 million seed funds provided by Government have grown to a revolving fund of Z \$2.2 billion. Over 2 000 jobs have been directly created and a further 7 000 preserved across the benefitting sectors. IDCZ declared a dividend to Government in 2021 for the first time in 12 years.
2. Agro-based rural industrialisation, under which value addition and beneficiation industries are being established in provinces and marginalized areas with resource endowments.

The manufacturing sector contribution to GDP increased from 15.7% in 2019 to 18.4% in 2021, with manufactured exports growing from US\$383 million to US\$404 million. Industrial capacity utilisation re-bounded from 47% in the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter of 2020 to 66% in the similar Quarter of 2021. Shelf-space occupancy has correspondingly increased from 55% in 2021 to the current 80%. Furthermore, manufacturing sector employment has

increased by 1.4% during the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2022 compared to the similar period of 2021. NSSA data indicates that employment in the manufacturing sector grew from 1.3 million in October 2021 to 1.4 million in June 2022.

Highlights of manufacturing subsector performance are as outlined below.

1. The food and beverages sub-sector witnessed significant growth.
2. In the fertiliser industry, the 5-Year Fertiliser Import Substitution Roadmap is currently being implemented to increase the local production of fertilizers.
3. The pharmaceuticals sub-sector has witnessed growth in capacity utilisation from 12% to 45% and the number of players has increased from 8 to 10, with the COVID-19 outbreak having resulted in local producers expanding operations and venturing into the production of PPEs and COVID-19 drugs, among others.
4. There has been remarkable developments in the metals and electrical sub-sector, key among which is the Dinson Iron and Steel Company project in Manhize, which will produce 1.2 million metric tonnes of steel and create over 10 000 jobs through an investment of US\$60 billion;
5. In the dairy sub-sector implementation of the 5-Year Dairy Sector Development Plan is being accelerated, and production of raw milk has so far increased from 79.6 million litres in 2021 to the current 83 million litres.
6. The sugar industry has excess milling capacity which stands at around 600 000 metric tonnes per annum, while refining capacity is 240 000 metric tonnes per annum. The Sugar Act is being reviewed to consider sugar as a strategic crop, while engagements are being undertaken

with key stakeholders to promote new investments and players in the sector.

Meanwhile, in the Commerce sector service-driven industrialisation plays a significant role in the development of other sectors of the economy, which accounts for about 60% of the industry contribution to the country's GDP. E-Commerce is now taking precedence in the retailing sector. There are massive expansions and establishments by retailers in Fast Moving Consumer Goods, Hardware, Furniture, Clothing and Motor Spares. The Consumer Protection Commission was successfully established to operationalise the Consumer Protection Act, and the National Quality Policy has been developed to promote the production of quality products, as well as curb the importation of sub-standard goods.

Cabinet wishes to advise that the contribution of small and medium enterprises as well as the informal sector to industry performance is still being worked out, and the report will be presented by mid-February, 2023.

Accordingly, the manufacturing entities will continue being prioritised in the allocation of foreign currency to enable the entities to fund the re-tooling of their plants and machinery. Increased exports will eventually eliminate the need for allocations of foreign currency, as the economy evolves towards the normal production and trading environment.

## **7.0 REPORTS ON PRIORITY PROJECTS FOR THE 3<sup>RD</sup> 100-DAY CYCLE OF 2022**

Cabinet adopted Reports on Priority Projects for the 3<sup>rd</sup> 100-Day Cycle of 2022, which were tabled by the:

- Minister of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries Water and Rural Development, Honourable Dr. Anxious Jongwe Masuka;
- Minister of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development, Honourable Dr. Sithembiso Nyoni; and
- Minister of Youth, Sport, Arts and Recreation, Honourable Dr. Kirsty Coventry.

**7.1 The Minister of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries Water and Rural Development** highlighted progress on the projects which his Ministry is implementing as follows:

- 1.1. Under *Irrigation Development*, 50 of the targeted 100 hectares have been developed at Mtawatawa Irrigation Scheme in Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe District, Mashonaland East Province, while 176 of the targeted 200 hectares has been developed at Kanyemba Irrigation Scheme in the Mbire District, Mashonaland Central Province;
- 1.2 150 boreholes were drilled, and 16 solar-powered piped water schemes were developed;
- 1.3 2 450 263 households were trained on *Pfumvudza/Intwasa*, and 392 metric tonnes of maize seed, 24.4 mt of sorghum seed, 4 001 mt of basal fertiliser and 832 mt of top dressing fertiliser were distributed;
- 1.4 The solarisation of Administration Blocks at Mazowe Veterinary College, and Kushinga Phikelela; Shamva; Gwebi; Chibero; Mlezu;

Rio Tinto; and Esigodini Agricultural Colleges has reached 60% of completion;

- 1.5 Of the total 430 tractors distributed under the *Belarus Mechanisation Facility Phase 2*, 400 were distributed to AFC, while 30 were distributed to the Rural Infrastructure Development Agency. A total of 6 combine harvesters were distributed to AFC.
- 1.6 1 990 951 of the targeted 2 550 000 birds were vaccinated, and 148 of the targeted 300 dip tanks were rehabilitated;
- 1.7 One hundred and sixty-two thousand and fifty-nine (162 059) four-week old rural chicks were distributed under the *Presidential Poultry Scheme*; and
- 1.8 343 A2 farms were surveyed out of the targeted 500, 1 902 permits issued out of the targeted 1 000, and twenty-seven 99-year leases were issued out of the targeted 16.

**7.2 The Minister of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development** highlighted the following progress for projects being implemented in her sector:

- 1.1 Phase 2 of the construction of the *Guruve Women Gold Milling Centre*, Mashonaland Central Province has reached 95% of completion;
- 1.2 Thirty-five (35) of the targeted 43 *Women Gender-Based Violence Survivors* from Chipinge, Manicaland Province were trained in business management, issued with start-up kits (solar driers) and linked to markets;

- 1.3 Twenty out of the targeted thirty women's groups were funded by the *Women Empowerment Fund* in Mashonaland West and Midlands;
- 1.4 *Product Certification by the Standards Association of Zimbabwe (SAZ) for 30 community groups* has reached 60% of completion, with standards and certification awareness campaigns and trainings having been conducted in Manicaland, Midlands, Masvingo, Matabeleland North, Matabeleland South, Mashonaland West and Mashonaland East provinces;
- 1.5 The operationalisation of the two *Value Addition Centres* at Kusimudzirana Food Processing Centre in Gokwe South District in Midlands Province and the Value Addition Centre in Lupane, Matabeleland North Province has reached 64% of completion;
- 1.6 The *funding of 30 Community Groups and 50 Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)* has reached 58% of completion;
- 1.7 The *targeted business registration of 80 informal enterprises and 30 community groups* has reached 75% of completion;
- 1.8 The *construction of Gwanda Micro-Small and Medium Enterprises Vendor Marts* has reached 60% of completion; and
- 1.9 The Graduation of *240 Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises* has reached 70% of completion;

### **7.3 The Minister of Youth, Sport, Arts and Recreation**

highlighted progress made for projects made under her purview:

- 1.1 The *Community Skills Outreach Programme* is at 84% of Completion, with a total of 1 022 youth having undergone training in various trades at the Vocational Training Centres and

900 inducted into the Programme under the International Labour Organisation Phase 1;

- 1.2 The launch of the *Sport Inclusion for Marginalised Communities- Disability Sport Festival including Albinism* was held in Mashonaland East Province in September 2022, and Disability and Albinism Walk for Life events were held at Danhiko and Girls High School in Harare and Bulawayo Metropolitan provinces; Vumba in Manicaland province; Bindura in Mashonaland Central and Midlands;
- 1.3 The *Capacity Development of 10 Provincial and 30 District Sport Officers in Fitness and Wellness Instructor's Course* has reached 60% of completion;
- 1.4 The renovations to the *Beitbridge Interact Centre Conference Room* in Matabeleland South Province is at 20% of completion; and
- 1.5 The operationalisation of the *Youth Kapenta Fishing Projects* in Binga District, Matabeleland North Province is 80% complete, with 4 of the 5 fishing projects having received boats.

## **8.0 PRINCIPLES FOR THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE ZIMBABWE MEDIA COMMISSION ACT [CHAPTER 10:35]**

Cabinet received and approved the principles to amend the Zimbabwe Media Commission Act [Chapter 10:35], as presented by the Minister of Information, Publicity and Broadcasting Services, Hon. Monica Mutsvangwa. Cabinet wishes to inform the public that the Zimbabwe Media Commission Act is being amended to incorporate proposals by



stakeholders following extensive consultations that were carried out. The amendments will seek, among other provisions, to provide for:

- a) additional functions of the Zimbabwe Media Commission, which will include accrediting of local and foreign media practitioners; registration of Mass Media Services; and the regulation and quality assurance of journalism and mass media communication training;
- b) delegation of disciplinary powers to professional bodies registered with the Commission; and
- c) Payment of annual levies into the Media Fund by registered media services.

## **9.0 PRINCIPLES FOR THE PROPOSED MEDIA PRACTITIONERS BILL**

Cabinet received and approved the principles for the proposed Media Practitioners Bill, as presented by the Minister of Information, Publicity and Broadcasting Services, Hon. Monica Mutsvangwa. Cabinet wishes to inform the public that the Media Practitioners Bill will provide parameters for media co-regulation and bring professionalism to the media sector through the implementation of Codes of Ethics. The Bill will seek, among other provisions, to provide for:

- a) establishment of professional bodies for purposes of disciplining members through delegated powers of the Zimbabwe Media Commission;
- b) the duties of the professional bodies; and
- c) the drafting of a Code of Ethics by each professional body.

**10.0 REPORT ON THE SADC EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE OF THE ORGAN MEETING (MCO): WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA: 30 NOVEMBER, 2022**

Cabinet received and adopted the Report on the SADC Extraordinary Ministerial Committee of the Organ Meeting (MCO) held in Windhoek, Namibia, on 30 November, 2022, which was presented by the Minister of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development, Hon. Prof. Amon Murwira as the Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

The Ministerial Committee of the Organ is responsible for the provision of a foundation for peace, security and stability which are prerequisites for regional socio-economic development and the general well-being of citizens.

Cabinet highlights that Zimbabwe expressed satisfaction to SADC Member States for their support against the illegal sanctions by the USA as ably demonstrated through various activities by Member States in marking the SADC Anti-Sanctions Day.

The Meeting resolved on strategies to enhance the criteria for the appointment of the Panel of Elders through amending the SADC Mediation, Conflict Prevention and Preventative Diplomacy Structure Guidelines. In order to enhance the effectiveness and status of the SADC Election Observer Missions (SEOM), the Organ agreed that the Electoral Missions will henceforth be headed by former Heads of State as opposed to "eminent persons", but members of the panel who are not former

Heads of State and Government will serve until the end of their current tenure. In this regard, amendment will be made to the SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections.

Cabinet wishes to further advise that the Organ also discussed the political and security situation in the region, and condemned the upsurge of conflicts and activities of illegal armed groups.

**I THANK YOU!**