

TWENTY-SIXTH POST-CABINET PRESS BRIEFING

24TH 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 the pandemic, the **country's** cumulative COVID-19 cases stood at 256 628 as at 22nd August, 2022, with 250 895 recoveries and 5 592 deaths. The recovery rate was 98%, with 141 active cases. A total of 12 new admissions were recorded during the week, and one patient was admitted to the intensive care unit at Parirenyatwa Group of Hospitals in Harare. The majority of those who were admitted in hospital had not been vaccinated, hence the nation is encouraged to get vaccinated. Cabinet notes that the pandemic continues to be brought under control in most provinces, even though Midlands, Masvingo and Matabeleland South had recorded small increases in new cases over the past 14 days.

Regarding the national vaccination programme, Cabinet wishes to inform the nation that, as at 22nd August, 2022, a total of 6 401 018 first doses of the

COVID-19 vaccine had been administered, while 4 761 840 people had received their second dose, and 979 244 their third dose. Routine vaccination activities are continuing at all health facilities and the public is encouraged to get vaccinated. On the vaccination coverage in schools, Cabinet reports that out of the 2 615 registered secondary schools nationwide, a total of 1 942 (73%) have reached a vaccination coverage of 70% or more. Schools that have not reached the 70% vaccination coverage are mostly in Harare Metropolitan, Manicaland and Midlands provinces. Cabinet agreed that schools in these provinces must set up vaccination desks as they register learners for the schools re-opening in September 2022. This approach is expected to help identify and mop up all secondary learners who have not been vaccinated and hence ensure that they are all vaccinated before they resume classes.

Regarding the Monkeypox global outbreak, Cabinet advises that according to the World Health Organisation (WHO) global epidemiological situation report of 18th August 2022, a total of 39 110 cases and 12 deaths have been reported from 94 countries since the beginning of 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.

The nation is being informed that all provinces have strengthened their Measles outbreak response initiative. Most health facilities conducted facility-based Measles outreach vaccination activities targeting the unvaccinated learners. Cabinet directed that the National Virology Reference Laboratory must speed up processing of Measles samples in order to facilitate quick follow-up and timely case management.

In addition to continued focus on critical COVID-19 response activities especially the COVID-19 vaccination initiatives, Cabinet resolved that:

- a) all provinces must remain on high alert for the local Measles outbreak, the regional poliomyelitis and the global Monkeypox outbreaks; and
- b) the National Virology Reference Laboratory must speed up processing of Measles samples in order to facilitate quick follow-up and timely case management.

2.0 FOOD DEFICIT MITIGATION STRATEGY

Cabinet considered and approved the Proposed Response Plan for the 2022-2023 Food Deficit Mitigation Strategy, as presented by the Minister of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare, Hon. Prof. Paul Mavima.

The nation is being advised that for the 2022/2023 consumption year, the projections of the Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee

(ZIMVAC) for Rural Livelihood Assessment Results (2022) indicated **that approximately 38% of the country's** rural population consisting of 3.8 million people will be food insecure over the peak hunger period, that is, January to March 2023.

Cabinet wishes to assure the nation that all the 3.8 million people projected to be food insecure will be targeted as beneficiaries. Government will distribute food to all the needy households in provinces. The World Food Programme and other development partners are expected to channel their food assistance through Government structures, as per practice.

The nation is assured that the country has 490 000 metric tonnes of grain in the Strategic Grain Reserve. Thus, the 120 000 metric tonnes required to support the needy households will be sufficiently covered. The targeting of beneficiaries and distribution of grain will be undertaken through District Drought Relief Committees.

3.0 PROGRESS REPORT ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW PARLIAMENT BUILDING

The Minister of Local Government and Public Works, Honourable July Moyo presented the progress report on the construction of the New Parliament Building in Mt Hampden.

Cabinet reports that construction of the New Parliament Building which is located 20km northwest of Harare City in Mt Hampden, Harare commenced on 30th November, 2018. This followed the receipt of RMBY 675 860 000 from the Peoples Republic of China. The building was designed by a Chinese company named SIPPR working together with the Zimbabwe Design Team. The construction contract was awarded to Shanghai Construction Group Company Limited, with the Ministry of Local Government and Public Works as the coordinator and supervisor for the project. The project was supposed to be completed by the end of July 2021, but was delayed by eight months following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The nation is being informed that the New Parliament Building structure is now 100 percent complete. The project employed more than 500 Chinese and 1 200 locals. However, there are still outstanding works including car parks, retaining walls and landscaping which Government is undertaking. Cabinet has directed Treasury to urgently release the funds required to complete the outstanding works.

Government is grateful for the all weather **support rendered by the People's Republic of China.**

4.0 UPDATE ON THE RESUSCITATION OF CSC (PVT) LTD

Cabinet received an update on the Resuscitation of the Cold Storage Company (CSC) (Pvt) LTD, as presented by the Minister of Lands,

Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development, Honourable Dr Anxious Masuka.

The nation will recall that Cabinet approved that the Cold Storage Company be resuscitated through a concessionary Rehabilitate, Operate and Transfer (ROT) Agreement. A Livestock Joint Farming Concession Agreement was subsequently signed between the Government of the Republic of Zimbabwe and Boustead Beef (Pvt) Ltd on 22 January, 2019.

Boustead Beef currently has a staff complement of 169 inclusive of management and employees. Following the take-over, employees started receiving their contractual salaries and benefits; and statutory payroll deductions were remitted to NSSA, ZIMRA, and ZIMDEF, among other agencies.

The nation is further being informed that Boustead Beef (Pvt) Ltd has to date utilized US\$24 million in the rehabilitation of CSC. The rehabilitation of the Bulawayo plant is now complete, and it was re-opened by the Honourable Vice President, Dr C.D.G.N. Chiwenga on 18th August, 2022. This has paved way for an increase in slaughter capacity to 2 000 cattle per day, from the previous 60. Repairs for the Bulawayo Canning Plant have also commenced. Infrastructure at three ranches has been rehabilitated and modernized. The CSC Board is now in place, and is seized with the accelerated rehabilitation of assets and mapping of a business strategy for the organization. CSC has initiated a livestock feedlot operation and a micro-finance facility of US\$36

million, which at full capacity can finance up to 120 000 head. CSC is also negotiating export contracts for beef products to the United Kingdom, various European Union member States, Malta, and Middle Eastern, Asian and African markets. Samson Brands has also been incorporated to market the CSC products on the local market.

5.0 FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE AND SKYPOWER GLOBAL (CAYMAN) OF THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES (UAE)

Cabinet considered and approved the Framework Agreement between the Republic of Zimbabwe and Skypower Global (CAYMAN) of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) as presented by Honourable Zhemu Soda, Minister of Energy and Power Development.

The nation is being informed that in support of the initiative to promote investments, Government seeks to conclude a framework with Skypower Global (CAYMAN) of the United Arab Emirates for the construction of solar-based power generation plants of up to 500 megawatts capacity, in a phased approach. The Framework Agreement will pave way for engagement between Skypower Global and ZESA Holdings in order for the two entities to negotiate a Power Purchase Agreement as well as other ancilliary agreements relevant to power generation.

Cabinet advises that alternative sources of energy, including and in this instance, solar power, will complement the existing hydro and thermal power production systems, thereby increasing access to electricity in Zimbabwe and enabling growth of the economy. This initiative comes against the backdrop of already existing good relations between Zimbabwe and the UAE, as was enhanced through the Dubai Expo 2020 Engagement.

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

Cabinet received reports on progress in the implementation of priority projects for the 2nd 100-Day Cycle of 2022, as presented by the Ministers of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs; Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development; Youth, Sport, Arts and Recreation; National Housing and Social Amenities; and the Minister of State for Presidential Affairs and Monitoring Implementation of Government Programmes.

1 The Minister of Justice Legal and Parliamentary Affairs, Honourable Ziyambi Ziyambi, reported that the following progress has been recorded on projects under his purview:

- (i) 80 hectares of the wheat crop which was planted at the Hurungwe Prison farm in Mashonaland West Province is doing well, and the targeted yield of 240 tonnes is expected to be met;

- (ii) 30 hectares of the wheat crop at the Mutimurefu Prison farm in Masvingo Province is expected to yield the targeted 90 tonnes;
- (iii) Roofing of the new Epworth Magistrates Court is complete;
- (iv) Plumbing and electrification of the new Lupane Magistrates Court in Matabeleland North Province is 80% complete, while 95% of the office and courtroom furniture has been procured;
- (v) brick work on the southern wing of the new Gwanda Magistrates Court Complex in Matabeleland South Province and clearing of the road and car park have been completed, while trenching has reached 50%;
- (vi) works on the super structure of the new Chiredzi Magistrates Court in Masvingo Province is ongoing; and
- (vii) the Integrated Electronic Case Management System (IECMS) for efficient and effective justice delivery is being tested for compliance with court processes and specifications.

2 The Minister of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development, Honourable Dr Sithembiso Nyoni, reported on progress recorded for projects under her purview as follows:

- (i) construction of the Guruve Women Gold Milling Centre in Mashonaland Central Province is 70% complete;
- (ii) construction of the One-Stop centre at Mpilo Central Hospital in Bulawayo is 95% complete;

- (iii) funding of 30 Community Groups from 3 Provinces (Manicaland, Midlands and Bulawayo Metropolitan) under the Zimbabwe Community Development Fund (ZCDF) is 80% complete;
- (iv) the training and registration of 120 women under the Business Linkages for Women on the COMESA 50 Million African Women Speak on Line is 100% complete; and
- (v) construction of the Gwanda Vendor Mart in Matabelaland South Province is 60% complete.

3 The Minister of Youth, Sport, Arts and Recreation, Honourable Dr Kirsty Coventry, outlined the following progress for projects being implemented under her Ministry:

- (i) refurbishment of the Beitbridge Interact Centre Computer Laboratory has reached 20%;
- (ii) construction of the Kanyemba Arts and Culture Centre in Mashonaland Central Province has reached 10%;
- (iii) capacity Development for Sport and Recreation Leaders at the National, Provincial and District levels is 80% complete;
- (iv) construction of provincial Vocational Training Centres at Insukamini (Midlands Province), Chipinge (Manicaland Province), Mudzi (Mashonaland East Province), Sizinda (Bulawayo Metropolitan Province), Bindura (Mashonaland Central Province), Umguza (Matabeleland North Province), and Murombedzi (Mashonaland West Province) are at various levels of completion; and

- (v) construction of a goat hub dip tank facility at Phangeni VTC, Matabeleland South Province is 95% complete

4 The Minister of National Housing and Social Amenities, Honourable Daniel Garwe, outlined the following progress for projects being implemented in his sector:

- (i) construction of 4 blocks of flats at Dzivarasekwa in Harare Metropolitan Province has reached 69%;
- (ii) the Dzivarasekwa civil works in Harare Metropolitan Province involving construction of roads, sewer and water reticulation are at 95% completion;
- (iii) construction of 37 core housing units at Nsungwale in Binga, Matabeleland North Province for the 2019 flood victims is 92% complete;
- (iv) construction of roads and storm water drains at Empumalanga High Density stands in Hwange, Matabeleland North Province has reached 78%;
- (v) construction of 4 blocks of flats at Senga Former Messengers Camp in Gweru, Midlands Province has reached 31.75%;
- (vi) Construction of 4 blocks of flats in Marondera, Mashonaland East Province has reached 54%;
- (vii) servicing of 1 407 mixed-density residential stands at the Kasese-Kariba Housing Development Project in Mashonaland West Province has reached 61%;

- (viii) servicing for 999 medium density residential stands at Crownlands in Chinhoyi, Mashonaland West Province is ongoing; and
- (ix) **rehabilitation of 19 civil servants' houses in Lupane**, Matabeleland North Province is 80% complete.

5 The Minister of State for Presidential Affairs and Monitoring Implementation of Government Programmes, Honourable Joram Gumbo, reported progress on projects under the District Development Fund (DDF) as follows:

- (i) construction of Musukwe Bridge (Mashonaland West Province), Gunguhwe Bridge (Midlands Province) and Somgolo Bridge (Matabeleland North Province) are at 98%, 89% and 77% completion, respectively;
- (ii) evaluation of tenders for the Nyakasikana-Karanda (Mashonaland Central Province) was completed and awaits resolution, while evaluation of tenders for the Binga-Siakobvu Road (Matabeleland North Province) is in progress;
- (iii) the Muyambi Piped Water Scheme is 95% complete;
- (iv) Construction of Nyamawanga Dam (Mashonaland West Province), Chentali Dam (Matabeleland North Province) and Pfakanye Dam (Matabeleland South Province) are at 90%, 40% and 60% of completion, respectively; and

- (v) 80 boreholes have been drilled throughout the country, exceeding the initial target of 50

7.0 REPORT ON THE MID-TERM REVIEW OF THE THIRD SESSION OF THE ZIMBABWE-SOUTH AFRICA BI-NATIONAL COMMISSION

Cabinet received a report on the Mid-Term Review of the Third Session of the Zimbabwe-South Africa Bi-National Commission (BNC) which was held on 10 August, 2022 in Pretoria, South Africa, as presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Honourable Fredrick Shava.

The nation is being informed that the meeting reviewed implementation of programmes on cooperation between the two countries, which were adopted at the Third Session of the BNC held in Harare in March 2019. Cabinet expressed general satisfaction with the level of implementation of the agreed programmes, and urged that consultations be expedited on outstanding issues, especially in the economic sector.

Cabinet also acknowledged the need to improve on the balance of trade **between the two countries, which has historically been in South Africa's** favour, and agreed to expedite the establishment of the One Stop Border Post at Beitbridge/Musina in order to eliminate bottlenecks being encountered.

Cabinet noted with concern the continued malicious reports in the Social Media depicting Zimbabweans as the chief perpetrators of crime in South Africa and highlighted the need to consistently supply correct information in the formal media. Cabinet would like to assure the nation that Government remains committed to ensuring that its citizens are given the requisite protection and accorded the necessary dignity.

On Zimbabwe Exemption Permit, the Mid Term Review argued Ministers of Labour and of Home Affairs to meet by the end of October 2022 to make relevant interventions on Labour migration.

The ex-Wenela compensation issue took centre stage in this Mid-Term Review Session. It was agreed that the compensation of ex-Wenela mine workers should be operationalised.

I THANK YOU!