



NEW YEAR GREETINGS

TO THE

DIPLOMATIC CORPS

BY

THE PRESIDENT

HIS EXCELLENCY, CDE E. D. MNANGAGWA

STATE HOUSE

23 FEBRUARY 2023

Director of Ceremonies;

Vice President and Minister of Health and Child Care,
Hon. Gen. (Rtd) Dr. C. G. D. N. Chiwenga;

National Chairman of ZANU PF and Minister of Defence
and War Veterans Affairs, Hon. O. C. Z. Muchinguri-
Kashiri;

Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade,
Hon. Dr. F. Shava;

Other Honourable Ministers here present;

The Acting Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, Ambassador of
South Sudan, His Excellency Gabriel GaiRiak Makol;

Your Excellencies Heads of Diplomatic Missions here
present;

Senior Government Officials;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

It gives me great honour and pleasure to welcome you all
to this important gathering at the beginning of what
promises to be a great year in our national development

trajectory. The obtaining favourable rains foreshadow great prospects with regards our quest to realise Vision 2030 and prosperity for our country's citizenry.

On behalf of the Government and the People of Zimbabwe as well as that of my family, I extend my sincere New Year's Greetings to you, your Excellencies, mission staff and all your loved ones. Your presence here venerates us as a Nation.

Unfortunately, the recent Earthquake in Türkiye and Syria has claimed many lives and displaced millions of our brothers, sisters and children in one of the worst disasters our world has experienced in recent times. Our prayers are with the people of Türkiye and Syria.

In the case of our SADC region and my country as well, the frequency of cyclones and other weather related disasters has been increasing over the years. The SADC Disaster Preparedness and Response Strategy provide a

coordinated and multi-sectoral approach for the region to respond and reduce the risks of any disaster. Equally, it is important that multilateralism and humanism continue to prevail during disasters in which triumph supersedes that which may seek to divide us.

Excellencies;

Zimbabwe will soon be holding the Harmonised General Elections in line with our national Constitutional requirements. My Government reaffirms its commitment to the holding of free, peaceful and credible elections. The process is set to reflect the will of our people and our overarching quest to defend and promote our hard won independence.

Your Excellencies;

This year's Annual Meeting comes at a time when our country has been deepening its engagement and re-engagement drive. At the present moment, we are hosting His Excellency, the Former President of the

Republic of Mozambique Joaquim Chissano, in his capacity as the High-Level Facilitator of the Arrears Clearance and Debt Resolution Process, which is also being championed by Dr Akinwumi Adesina, President of the African Development Bank Group.

The High-Level Visit demonstrates our cooperation and also endears ourselves to financial institutions, while re-affirming our focus to be a friend to all and enemy to none. We, thus, aspire to leave no one and no place behind in our broader engagement and re-engagement drive.

At the continental level, I joined other Heads of State at the African Union Summit held under the theme: **‘The Year of the African Continental Free Trade Area: Acceleration of the African Continental Free Trade Area Implementation’**. We are, as the current crop of African leaders, solidifying our convergence towards accelerating the realisation of the people of Africa’s aspirations set out in the AU Agenda 2063. Africa is on the

rise, to be able to feed itself, industrialise, modernise and grow its economies.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

I applaud you all for the progressive and cordial nature of the ongoing engagement efforts. This is reflected by the numerous successes we continue to score together, arising from our collaboration and cooperation.

Furthermore, my Government acknowledges the removal of sanctions by the European Union and development assistance availed by the European Development Fund. It is pleasing that political dialogue with the EU continues under Article 8 of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement.

We are optimistic that the remaining punitive and inhibitive illegal sanctions on the Zimbabwe Defence Industries will be removed.

It is in our collective interests, to continue taking advantage of opportunities and mutually beneficial partnerships which our countries have to offer in terms of investment and trade.

With regards re-joining the Commonwealth, Zimbabwe awaits the release of the November 2022 Commonwealth Assessment Mission Report and remains optimistic of positive outcomes.

Your Excellencies;

In terms of our relations with the United States of America, commendable progress has been equally made in a number of areas. We welcome the invitation for Zimbabwe to participate at the US-Africa Summit held in Washington D.C. in December 2022.

However, the continued existence of illegal sanctions has been an albatross, suffocating existing goodwill and commendable efforts of engagements being spearheaded

by industrialists on both sides. The increased and glaring consensus on both sides that, the illegal sanctions are hindering our full potential in terms of bilateral trade and cooperation must be used for the two peoples to never remain stuck in the past.

Meanwhile, I am grateful that our African brothers continue to stand with us, in our call for the immediate and unconditional removal of the illegal sanctions. At the 77th UN General Assembly, the African Union amplified our continental voice. We forever cherish the continued solidarity from the AU, SADC and other progressive organisations.

Beyond our continent, our nation has received continued support from China and Russia as we relentlessly pursue the removal of sanctions. My Government commends the solidarity and cordial ties, borne out of our historic cooperation now enabling us to respond to the realities of the current epoch.

Excellencies;

Climate change is a reality. In this regard, Zimbabwe remains committed to sustainable environmental practices and to build resilience and adaptive capacities for communities. The ongoing dialogue and cooperation in the environmental sector at various levels should bring the tangible envisaged results.

At the regional level, Zimbabwe remains committed to working with other member states towards the realisation of durable peace across SADC. The peaceful resolution of conflicts within our region, the continent and beyond must be respected and upheld. Hence, in the context of territorial integrity and the sovereignty of member states, overt and covert interference in internal affairs must be condemned.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen;

My Government continues to work towards improving its export performance under the National Export Strategy. This is more critical as exports remain the most sustainable

source of foreign currency and an important driver for economic growth and development.

The export sector has contributed an average of 60% to Zimbabwe's foreign currency earnings annually ahead of diaspora remittances, loan proceeds and foreign direct investment. My Government continues to work towards increasing export earnings now and into the future.

While remittances have been part of our lifeblood, including during the difficult COVID-19 period, my Government is now in a relentless pursuit to collectively organise the diaspora dividend for even greater contribution across our economic and social sectors.

To augment this, my Government is implementing an ambitious domestic reform programme geared towards opening and transforming the country. This is anchored on an inclusive development model, accelerating sustained

economic growth, science, technology and innovation as well as human development.

We remain determined to accelerate the sustainable socio-economic development of our country. I am grateful for the partnerships and cooperation by development partners and civil society organisations from your countries. Their complementary efforts towards improving the quality of lives in areas such as water, hygiene and sanitation, among others, are commendable.

In the meantime, allow me to dispel perceptions regarding the Private and Voluntary Organisations Bill. The legal instrument, as in any other jurisdiction, facilitates the state to exercise its regulatory function, while ensuring enhanced aid coordination and convergence of the work of development partners within the framework of our national priorities.

Your Excellencies;

I want to call upon you all to ride on the path of dialogue and engagement, which is the hallmark of the Second Republic. Rest assured, my door is forever open and my arms are outstretched to dialogue with you and your respective Governments towards broadening and deepening our relations and understanding.

Let us occupy ourselves and missions by exploring Zimbabwe's vast and diverse opportunities across the economic strata. Equally, during your tour of duty, I challenge you to be embodiments of peace, love and harmony.

Finally, allow me on behalf of the people and Government of Zimbabwe and indeed on my own behalf, to convey my best New Year's wishes to you and your capitals. I wish you, your families and your teams all the best and good health in the New Year.

I now invite you to join me in proposing a toast:

- To your good health and that of your families;
- To our continued cooperation and friendship; and
- To a rewarding and fulfilling 2023.

I thank you.