



DRAFT PRESS STATEMENT

BY THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE HONOURABLE AMBASSADOR FREDERICK M. SHAVA TO MARK THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN ZIMBABWE AND TURKEY.

Today, 16 June 2022, is a Special Day in the Republic of Zimbabwe and the Republic of Turkey diplomatic relations as we celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. The opening of the Turkish Embassy in Harare in June 2011 highlighted the growing relations between our two countries which date back to the time of Zimbabwe's liberation struggle. The opening symbolized Turkey's increased foreign policy focus on Africa through the Turkey/Africa Partnership arrangement which started with the inaugural Summit meeting that was held in 2008 in Istanbul.

In furtherance of its policy of Engagement and Re-engagement, the new dispensation in Zimbabwe reciprocated by opening a resident Embassy in Ankara in October 2019. This gave further impetus to the already existing excellent relations between our two countries. Unfortunately, this coincided with the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic which ravaged the world, destroyed economies and severely curtailed diplomatic and economic interactions between countries.

However, the lifting of the Covid-19 induced travel restrictions has witnessed enhanced interaction and concerted desire to increase economic relations between Zimbabwe and Turkey. In the past two years there have been significant exchanges of high-level visits from both the public and private sectors. Several memoranda of understanding and agreements on cooperation in many sectors have been discussed and finalised and only await signing at the appropriate time.

As we mark this important day we are pleased with the energy and enthusiasm shown by the people of Turkey and Zimbabwe to exploit the vast trade, investment and tourism opportunities that exist in both countries. I am pleased to note that without the encumbrances of the Western illegal sanctions, Turkey, as it has done in several African countries, is ready to cooperate with Zimbabwe on a mutually beneficial win-win basis. Business people in both countries are strongly urged to take advantage of the existing opportunities and synergies to strengthen economic relations whilst the two governments are in the process of concluding the legal frameworks that will create a conducive business environment.

I should emphasize that **today** all the necessary conditions have been created for expanding and deepening productive cooperation between our two countries. Our friendly relations which are based on mutual respect and beneficial partnership should continue to develop in the interests of the two countries.

HONOURABLE AMBASSADOR FREDERICK SHAVA
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE