

First Lady, Amai A. Mnangagwa;

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

**Vice President and Second Secretary of ZANU PF,
Col. (Rtd) K. C. D. Mohadi;**

Speaker of Parliament, Hon. Adv. J. F. Mudenda;

President of the Senate, Hon. M. M. Chinomona;

Chief Justice, Hon. L. Malaba;

Honourable Ministers of Government;

**President of the Chief's Council Chief F. Z.
Charumbira and other traditional leaders here
present;**

**Honourable Members of Parliament, and the
Senate;**

Senior Government Officials;

Service Chiefs;

**Fellow Zimbabweans here at home and in the
Diaspora;**

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Comrades and Friends.

It is my singular honour and privilege to address this August House, marking the opening of the Fifth Session of the Ninth Parliament of Zimbabwe. This State-of-the-Art and Majestic, New Parliament Building here in Mt. Hampden, where we are gathered, is testimony of the strategic and comprehensive partnership and excellent fraternal relations between our great motherland, Zimbabwe and the People's Republic of China.

The Session comes ahead of the 2023 Harmonised General Elections. Parliament is, therefore, expected to accelerate the completion of the matters on the legislative agenda in line with the expectations of the electorate.

The period since my last address to this Parliament has seen unprecedented socio-economic growth as well as the accelerated implementation of the National Development Strategy 1.

Tight monetary and fiscal policy measures to stabilise the economy, and curtail speculative borrowing and other rent-seeking behaviour, are bearing fruit.

Gold coins valued at ZW\$9.5 billion were sold as at 30th September, 2022. Smaller denominations of the gold coins have been unveiled by the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe to broaden access and inclusivity. Month-on-month inflation for September significantly declined to 3.5% from 12.4% in August, 2022. Every Zimbabwean must jealously guard this stability.

Meanwhile, foreign currency earnings amounted to US\$7.7 billion for the 8 months up to 31st August, 2022. This reflects a 32.4% increase from the US\$5.8 billion recorded over the corresponding period in 2021.

Mr Speaker Sir, Madame President;

In agriculture, the Presidential Input Programme is targeting 3 million farmers for enhanced production of cereals, oilseeds and legumes. The programme will support five Pfumvudza/Intwasa plots per household, with specific crop input packages based on agro-ecological regions. The Zunde RaMambo/Isiphala SeNkosi Programme has been extended to also cover Headmen and Village Heads. Our traditional leaders are constantly with our people at grassroots level. Hence, my Government will render all possible support to them.

In mining, output growth is evident in gold, coal, chrome, PGMs and related minerals. The commissioning of the Cam and Motor Mine Biox Plant; Radnor Mine and expansion of Blanket Mine, among others, coupled with contributions from artisanal miners, have resulted in increased gold production.

Investments in the lithium sector are pleasing and encompass extraction through to value addition.

Government is decisively dealing with illegal mining and smuggling of precious minerals. All players in the sector are once again urged to operate legally and in an environmentally sustainable manner.

The economy is growing faster than power supply. The Hwange Unit 7 is expected to be commissioned by year end. A further 300 MW from Unit 8 is expected to come on-stream by the second quarter of 2023. Efforts are on-going to expand the country's energy mix, with focus on renewable energy.

Mr Speaker Sir, Madame President;

The rebound of the manufacturing sector is encouraging, with industrial capacity utilisation exceeding 66% in 2022, up from 47% in 2020. The implementation of the Local Content Strategy has seen the introduction of new products that are critical in the agriculture, mining and transport sectors, among others.

Modern and efficient infrastructure is the cornerstone for economic development. More than 340 kilometres

of the Harare-Beitbridge road has been completed and opened to traffic. Construction of the Mbudzi Interchange is also well underway. Local companies contracted on the Emergency Road Rehabilitation Programme have created both direct and indirect jobs. Considerable progress has been made on airstrips such as Binga and Bumi Hills, while the upgrading and modernisation of the Robert Gabriel Mugabe International Airport is on schedule. Phase One of the Beitbridge Border Post Modernisation Project is complete and now open to the public.

The tourism and hospitality sector is on a rapid post-COVID-19 recovery path and more airlines are servicing our routes.

State Enterprises and Parastatals have great potential to contribute to economic growth. As such, their profitability and efficiency remain a priority. The Grain Marketing Board demerger has separated the Strategic Grain Reserve from the Commercial division. Zimbabwe Mining Development Corporation

subsidiaries have been recapitalised and strengthened through joint venture partnerships. Furthermore, the Airports Company of Zimbabwe and the Civil Aviation Authority of Zimbabwe are now operating as two distinct companies.

Mr Speaker Sir, Madame President;

In April of this year, our nation accomplished a historic transition by undertaking a digital Population and Housing Census, replacing the traditional paper based system. Results were delivered within a record time of less than three months. This is a sample of the importance of technologies and innovation in the improvement of our systems.

The Competence-Based Curriculum in primary and secondary schools supports the transition from school to the world of work through study of sciences, technology, innovation and the production of goods and services.

Our education revolution dubbed “Chimurenga Chepfungwa” is progressing at an accelerated pace. Robust innovation and industrialisation ecosystems now characterise our Universities and Colleges with more and more of our young talented boys and girls registering patents, start-ups and breakthrough inventions. These will continue to be nurtured for commercialisation as we leap forward the modernisation and industrialisation of our motherland.

Zimbabwe recently launched our first satellite, ZimSat-1 into Space. This will have far reaching impacts on all sectors of the economy, including agriculture, mining, as well as weather and land management systems.

Our quest to achieve Universal Health Coverage remains on course. Renovations and the construction of health centres, clinics and district hospitals are being speeded up. The new Pathology and Diagnostic Centre at Midlands State University, with state-of-the-art equipment has increased community access to related services.

The Simon Mazorodze School of Medical and Health Sciences has been established as part of a comprehensive programme to enhance the training of Medical Practitioners in the country. This becomes the fourth Medical and Health Sciences School in our country.

Polytechnics, Teachers Colleges and Industrial Training Centres are now under the newly created Tertiary Education Council. The mandates of these colleges are being enhanced towards national development through learning of science, technology, engineering and innovation to produce goods and services that better the quality of life of our people.

Government is prioritising the roll-out of the e-Government system. Citizens should be able to obtain permits, licences and personal documents without visiting Government offices. To date, the use of information communication technologies has greatly enhanced service delivery within the Civil

Registry Department, which is now issuing passports more efficiently.

Mr Speaker Sir, Madame President;

Our responsive social protection measures are catering for vulnerable individuals, households and communities. Over two million orphans and vulnerable children have benefitted under the BEAM programme. The Food Deficit Mitigation Programme is ongoing.

Housing delivery is expected to spur the nation towards the attainment of Vision 2030, with projects underway in all parts of the country. Financial institutions and the private sector are commended for complementing Government efforts, in this regard.

Youth development and economic empowerment are critical cogs in the Second Republic's transformational agenda. Under the Youth Build Zimbabwe Programme, more youths are volunteering towards community and national development programmes.

All stakeholders are urged to scale up programmes to end the new menace of drug and substance abuse, child marriages as well as all forms of violence.

Government is mainstreaming and entrenching a New Work Culture across the public sector to bolster performance and the delivery of quality services across all levels of public entities, including local authorities and state owned enterprises.

Mr Speaker Sir, Madame President;

Zimbabwe's foreign policy of Engagement and Re-engagement, as well as our thrust to be a "friend to all and an enemy to none," continues to bear fruit. Our diplomatic missions have been re-focussed towards economic diplomacy and diaspora engagement to attract investment and mutually beneficial partnerships.

The need for the unconditional removal of sanctions, which have constrained socio-economic growth for

decades, remains urgent and imperative. We are grateful to AU, SADC and other world leaders who made similar calls during the 77th United Nations General Assembly. Our country welcomes the invitation to attend the US-Africa Summit in December, 2022 and emphasis remains on dialogue and multilateralism as the best option to resolve today's global challenges.

We take pride in the election of Honourable Chief Charumbira as President of the Pan African Parliament, Dr. Cosmas Zavazava as Director of the Telecommunications Development Bureau of the International Telecommunications Union as well as Zimbabwe's election into the International Civil Aviation Organisation Council. Our country has also assumed Chairmanship of the Kimberly Process Certification Scheme. A sanctions free Zimbabwe stands ready to do more, within the comity of nations.

Meanwhile, our Security Forces are contributing officers for Regional and International Peace Support

Operations under the United Nations, the African Union, and within SADC.

The participation of women in Peacekeeping Missions has increased, with the current Air Force of Zimbabwe deployment surpassing the 50% mark espoused in UN, AU and SADC Protocols on gender equity.

The all-encompassing Veterans of the Liberation Struggle Act is being implemented following the provision of funding for the operationalisation of the Veterans Investment Corporation.

Mr Speaker Sir, Madame President;

Allow me to now turn to the legislative business which must occupy the Parliamentary schedule during this final Session of the Ninth Parliament. The Office of the Attorney-General has since been hived off from the Ministry of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs. This should see this Office fully discharging its mandate more efficiently and effectively.

In the financial services sector, the Insurance Bill seeks to replace the Insurance Act to address regulatory gaps and weaknesses. The new Session must expedite passage of the Labour Amendment Bill.

Cabinet recently passed the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets (Compliance, Monitoring and Evaluation) Regulations, 2022 as well as the Amendments to the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets (General) (Amendment) Regulations, 2018 which, among other provisions, will require all procuring agencies to establish the market value of goods for ease of evaluation of quotations.

In line with the Agriculture Food Systems and Transformation Strategy, amendments to the Plant Breeders Act; the Animal Health Act; the Water Act; the ZINWA Act; the Land Commission Act; and the Bees Act will be tabled. Equally, the Fisheries and Aquaculture Bill; the Agricultural Resources

Conservation Bill; and the Agricultural Education Bill will enhance the attainment of food and nutrition security. In addition, the Sugar Act is being reviewed in order to classify sugarcane as a strategic crop.

The Mines and Minerals Amendment Bill now awaits gazetting. Farming and mining activities will be accorded due recognition in the resolution of disputes. The Bill will also strengthen environmental protection.

The Fifth Session must speedily consider legislation towards alignment of the Devolution and Decentralisation Programme of the Second Republic, through amendments of the Provincial Councils and Administration Act; the Rural District Council's Act; as well as the Regional, Town and Country Planning Act. The Disaster Risk Management Bill will promote the involvement of all citizens in effective disaster preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery measures.

Government shall be seeking Parliamentary ratification of various Memoranda of Understanding regarding partnerships to promote ICT infrastructure and skills development. Through the Electronic Transactions and Electronic Commerce Bill, Government seeks to establish a legal framework that facilitates fair, accessible, responsible and sustainable online transacting, including the recognition of digital signatures.

The Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) (Amendment) Bill, 2022; the Public Interest Disclosure (Protection of Whistle Blowers) Bill, 2022; the Electoral (Amendment) Bill, 2022; the Witness Protection Bill; the Zimbabwe Human Rights (Amendment) Bill; and the Legal Aid (Amendment) Bill must all be tabled during this Session. The Electoral (Amendment) Bill, which spells out new provisions for holding the 2023 Harmonised Elections, should be speedily concluded.

Outstanding Bills from the Fourth Session of the Ninth Parliament must be expedited. These include the Child Justice Bill, the Judicial Laws (Amendment) Bill, and the Prisons and Correctional Service (Amendment) Bill.

Mr Speaker Sir, Madame President;

As I conclude, I wish to reiterate that the attainment of Vision 2030 of a prosperous and empowered upper middle-income society requires raising production and productivity across all sectors of the economy. This can only be achieved if our people are united and peaceful.

Political players, seeking the people's mandate during the upcoming 2023 Harmonised Elections, must maintain and consolidate the peace, unity, harmony and love that we have built under the Second Republic. Violent confrontations have never been part of our culture.

Let me also emphasise that, although the COVID-19 pandemic has largely subsided, the virus still poses a threat. Therefore, there is need for all our people to remain vigilant.

I want to take this opportunity to wish Parliament success in dispensing its onerous duty as the elected representatives of the people of Zimbabwe.

With these remarks, it is now my singular honour and privilege to declare the Fifth Session of the Ninth Parliament of Zimbabwe officially open.

God bless you.

God bless Zimbabwe.

I thank you.