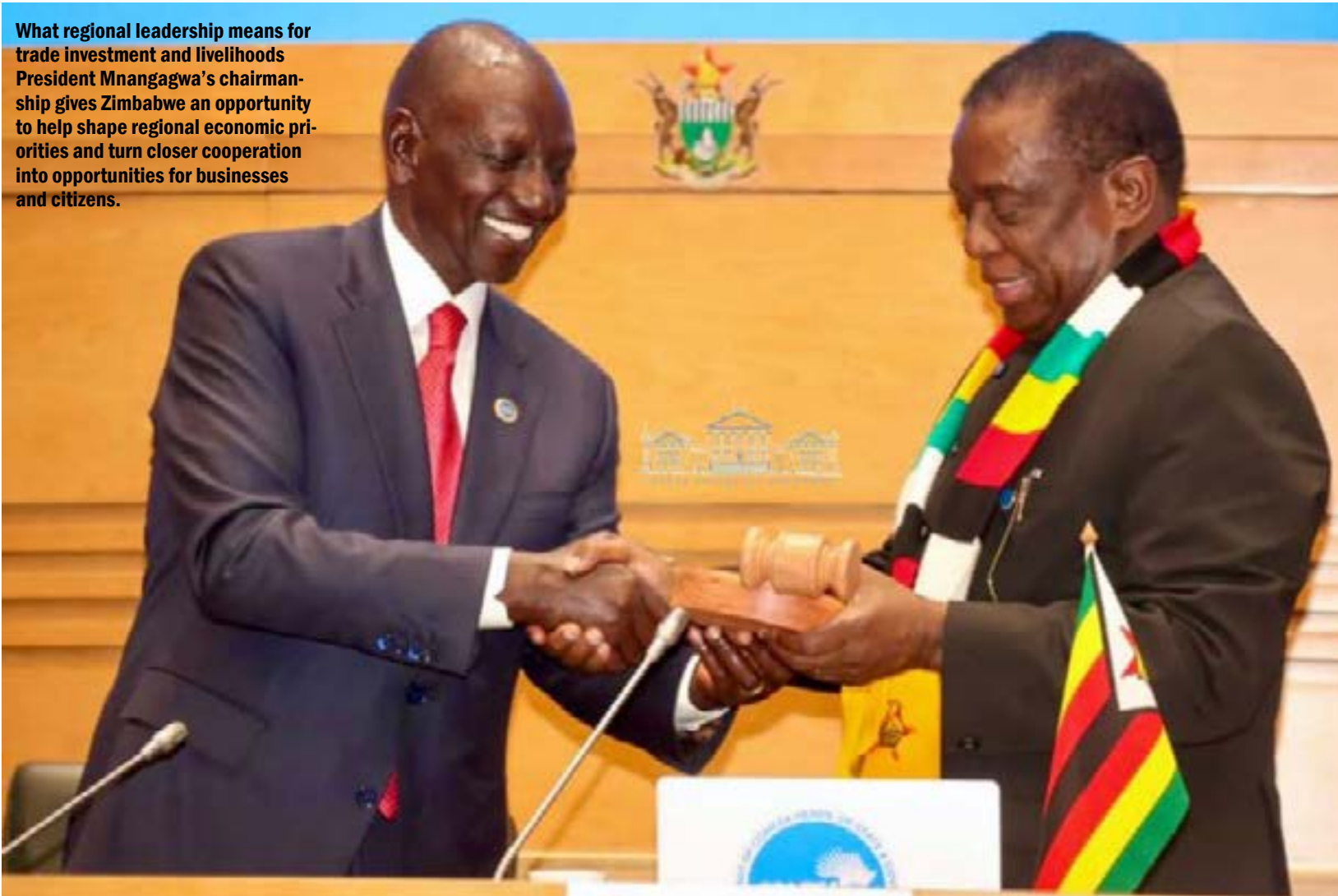


President ED Takes the COMESA Helm

What regional leadership means for trade investment and livelihoods
President Mnangagwa's chairmanship gives Zimbabwe an opportunity to help shape regional economic priorities and turn closer cooperation into opportunities for businesses and citizens.



President Emmerson Mnangagwa receives the ceremonial gavel from outgoing COMESA chairperson, Kenyan President William Ruto (left), marking Zimbabwe's assumption of the regional bloc's chairmanship for 2026-2027. — Picture: State House

Takudzwa Karowangoro

Zimbabwe's assumption of the COMESA chairmanship gives the country an opportunity to shape regional economic priorities, champion industrial development and help remove barriers that prevent African businesses from trading with their neighbours. President Emmerson Mnangagwa took over from Kenyan President William Ruto at the 25th COMESA Summit in Harare on October 22, assuming leadership for 2026-2027 as member states confront the challenge of turning regional commitments into investment, employment and improved livelihoods.

The significance extends beyond diplomatic recognition. Zimbabwe now has a prominent platform from which to advance an agenda linking industrial production, infrastructure, digital trade and access to finance across the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa.

Zimbabwe is already a longstanding COMESA member and participated in establishing its free trade area in 2000. The latest development is its elevation to the chairmanship, bringing greater responsibility for advancing the bloc's collective priorities.

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President ED Takes the COMESA Helm

From page 1

“On behalf of the people and Government of Zimbabwe, I take over the mantle of Chairperson of the COMESA Authority, with deep humility and a profound sense of duty,” President Mnangagwa said.

He identified implementation of the COMESA Medium-Term Strategic Plan for 2026–2030 as a major responsibility, placing economic delivery at the centre of Zimbabwe’s tenure.

For Zimbabwean businesses, the central opportunity is a larger market. Manufacturers able to sell beyond national borders can increase production, spread costs across larger volumes and build more sustainable operations. Farmers, processors, transporters and service providers could similarly benefit from stronger commercial links. However, reaching regional customers requires businesses to meet standards, secure working capital and deliver goods competitively.

President Mnangagwa connected integration directly to the needs of enterprises.

“To this end, our common market must enable enterprises to produce at scale, facilitate cross border movement of factors of production and reach new customers,” he said.

Expanded markets create possibilities, but Zimbabwean firms will need reliable production, consistent quality and efficient distribution to convert those possibilities into export earnings. Regional leadership provides an opportunity to promote these conditions alongside domestic business reforms. Ruto’s outgoing address illustrated both the region’s progress and its unfinished business. He reported that exports among COMESA members increased by 10.5 percent to US\$14.7 billion, while total exports to the world rose six percent to US\$212 billion. On those figures, exports within the bloc represented approximately seven percent of its worldwide exports. That proportion suggests considerable

scope to strengthen commercial relationships among member states and increase demand for regionally produced goods.

“Behind these numbers is a clear lesson. When we trade with one another, we grow together,” Ruto said.

For Zimbabwe, developing regional value chains could translate that ambition into production. Businesses can connect raw materials, processing capacity, specialist services and customers across borders, allowing different countries to contribute to the same finished product.

“On behalf of the people and Government of Zimbabwe, I take over the mantle of Chairperson of the COMESA Authority, with deep humility and a profound sense of duty,”

A Zimbabwean manufacturer could supply inputs to a regional producer, while an agricultural processor could source produce from neighbouring countries and sell finished goods more widely. Such arrangements depend on predictable rules, reliable supplies and affordable transport.

President Mnangagwa’s closing remarks placed value addition at the centre of this transformation.

“COMESA must become a region that produces more of what it consumes, adds value to its resources, and trades more among its membership, and competitively with the global markets,” he said.

For resource-producing economies, processing more materials within the region could retain greater value, support industrial skills and generate demand for engineering, logistics and other services. The potential benefits would extend beyond the factories undertaking the processing. However, beneficiation requires com-

mercially viable projects, dependable energy, suitable technology and buyers. Zimbabwe’s leadership will therefore be judged partly on whether it helps connect industrial ambitions with the conditions investors and producers need.

The Office of the President and Cabinet’s congratulatory message reinforced this direction, supporting local value addition and beneficiation as routes to industrialisation, meaningful employment and improved livelihoods. Another priority is reducing the difficulties associated with cross-border

trade. Lengthy procedures, duplicated documentation and uncertain clearance times can undermine preferential market access, particularly for smaller businesses with limited cash reserves. Ruto said the Electronic Certificate of Origin was operating in six member states, with work underway to connect certification systems across COMESA, SADC and the African Continental Free Trade Area.

Wider implementation could reduce repeated paperwork and make compliance more predictable. Zimbabwe’s chairmanship provides an opportunity to encourage compatible systems while ensuring that border agencies and businesses can use them effectively. Digital integration also offers opportunities for young entrepreneurs and service exporters. Accessible online systems could help smaller firms identify customers, obtain information and participate in regional commerce. These benefits will depend on affordable connectivity, digital skills, secure

transactions and confidence in data protection. Moving a procedure online will have limited impact if its intended users cannot access or understand it. The same practical considerations apply to women-led businesses and informal traders. Their participation requires understandable rules, accessible support and financing suited to smaller operations, alongside measures that make formal trade worthwhile.

Ruto highlighted regional initiatives intended to widen participation, including a €40 million trade competitive-

ness and market access programme and a €42.5 million circular economy programme. Zimbabwean enterprises would need to establish eligibility and pursue opportunities through the relevant channels.

Financing remains a defining challenge. Ruto urged member states to match their ambitions with resources and take greater ownership of regional development priorities.

“We cannot be ambitious in our plans and timid in our financing,” he said.

For Zimbabwe, the implication is that diplomatic visibility must be followed by investable projects. Investors and development financiers need credible feasibility studies, transparent arrangements, workable revenue models and confidence that commitments will be honoured.

Chairmanship can help convene partners and sustain attention, but investment will still depend on detailed project preparation. Government agencies, financiers and businesses must

work together to bring viable proposals to completion.

At household level, the potential benefits include employment, stronger markets for agricultural produce and wider opportunities for small enterprises. These gains will depend on whether regional reforms reduce costs and stimulate productive activity.

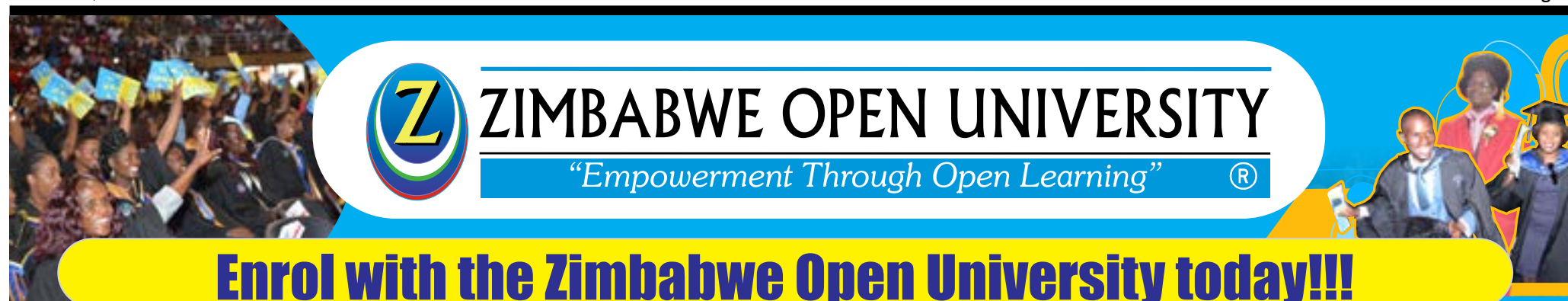
Easier trade also brings greater competition. Domestic firms will need to improve productivity and quality, while business support programmes should help smaller producers prepare for regional markets.

President Mnangagwa identified miners, farmers, manufacturers, traders, entrepreneurs, ICT specialists, innovators and investors as the people who will convert regional potential into productive economic activity.

Zimbabwe’s task is therefore both regional and domestic: build agreement among member states while strengthening the conditions in which its own enterprises operate. Its leadership must serve the collective interest while helping Zimbabwean businesses participate more effectively.

The chairmanship also gives Zimbabwe a platform to promote greater continuity between successive regional leadership teams. Progress on customs reform, infrastructure and investment often takes longer than a single term. Maintaining agreed priorities, monitoring implementation and reporting results would help ensure that summit decisions survive changes in leadership. This would give businesses greater confidence to plan across borders and help citizens assess how regional commitments are being translated into practical improvements over time.

By the end of the tenure, the clearest measures of success will be faster trade procedures, stronger production links, viable investments and businesses reaching new customers. For Zimbabwe and its neighbours, regional cooperation becomes meaningful when it improves people’s ability to produce, trade and earn a living.



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‘THIS IS THE ZIMBABWE WE ARE BUILDING’: President ED Salutes GZU Innovation

Takudzwa Karowangoro

PRESIDENT Emmerson Mnangagwa has praised Great Zimbabwe University’s growing contribution to national development, highlighting innovations that connect academic research with agriculture, healthcare and industry.

“This is the Zimbabwe we are building—one driven by innovation, heritage, and production,” President Mnangagwa said.

The President’s remarks came as GZU celebrated its 20th graduation ceremony in Masvingo on Friday, October 23, where he capped 3,496 graduates and officiated at the groundbreaking for the university’s new permanent campus.

“Congratulations to Great Zimbabwe University for leading from the front,” he said. (hurumende.com)

President Mnangagwa highlighted the university’s efforts to translate the Education 5.0 philosophy into practical projects addressing community needs.



President Emmerson Mnangagwa, Chancellor of Great Zimbabwe University, caps a PhD graduate during the institution’s 20th graduation ceremony in Masvingo on Friday, October 23, 2026.

Among them is the Guyo Rokwa Chivi traditional grain milling plant at the university’s Innovation Centre of Excellence in Dryland Agriculture. Developed in partnership with the Grain Marketing Board, the project connects farmers to processing facilities and markets.

The President said the plant had achieved grain recovery of more than 90 percent, demonstrating the potential of university-led innovation to

strengthen agricultural value chains.

He also highlighted the Madzimbahwe LifeTap Smart ID, intended to improve access to healthcare, alongside Log-iTruck, a digital logistics platform, and Psyche Me Up, an interactive tool for mental health education.

The new campus, which draws

inspiration from the Great Zimbabwe Monument, is intended to become the institution’s permanent administrative and cultural home.

GZU Vice-Chancellor Professor Rungano Zvobgo described the development as a significant milestone.

“Our new campus is therefore a dec-

laration of confidence in Zimbabwe’s future,” He said.

Women accounted for 63 percent of the graduating class, which included 2,461 undergraduates and 1,035 postgraduates.

Celebrations were also marked by remembrance. The university observed

a minute of silence for Tatenda Ngandu and Maxwell Katsvara, who died in a road accident while travelling to the graduation. They were awarded degrees posthumously, alongside Simbarashe Chimuchenga.

The ceremony was held under the theme “Driving Rural Industrialisation Through Research and Innovation”.

Sanctions Must Go, Says ED

Abel Karowangoro

PRESIDENT Emmerson Mnangagwa has called for the immediate removal of sanctions against Zimbabwe, setting out a strategy centred on regional trade, stronger domestic production and international partnerships to advance development despite external restrictions.

In his address for the 2026 SADC Anti-Sanctions Day commemorations, dated October 25, the President presents sanctions as a regional concern with consequences extending beyond Zimbabwe’s borders.

“Sanctions not only punish our country, but the entire SADC family and infringe Zimbabwe’s role in advancing an integrated Africa,” he says.

His message combines diplomatic resistance with a call for economic action: Zimbabwe must continue demanding the removal of restrictions while expanding its capacity to produce, trade and withstand international shocks.

“Even under the illegal economic sanctions, Zimbabwe is rising. Forward ever, backward never.”

The President describes the measures as illegal and unjustified, arguing that they undermine access to international finance, investment and global trade.

However, the current sanctions landscape requires distinction. Zimbabwe’s

position differs from countries facing extensive trade and financial restrictions, and several Western measures against Zimbabwe have changed in recent years.

The United States terminated its Zimbabwe-specific sanctions programme in March 2024 while imposing separate Global Magnitsky sanctions on named individuals and businesses, including President Mnangagwa. Washington attributed those designations to alleged corruption and serious human rights abuses. Zimbabwe rejects the broader sanctions approach as unjustified interference. (home.treasury.gov)

The European Union, meanwhile, extended its arms embargo until February 20, 2027, but removed provisions allowing travel bans and asset freezes under its Zimbabwe framework. These measures do not constitute a general embargo on ordinary commercial trade with Zimbabwe. (consilium.europa.eu)

Britain also lifted sanctions on four individuals and Zimbabwe Defence Industries in May 2025, although restrictions concerning military goods, related services and equipment that could be used for internal repression remain within its sanctions framework. (gov.uk, gov.uk)

These changes matter for businesses and investors: an accurate understanding of remaining restrictions can help prevent lawful transactions from being rejected unnecessarily.



Zimbabwe is nevertheless part of a much wider international debate about economic pressure and sovereign development.

Countries covered by active American sanctions programmes include Cuba, Iran, Russia, Belarus, Myanmar and Venezuela. Other programmes concern individuals, organisations or activities connected with countries including the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, South Sudan and Somalia. Their inclusion does not mean that every citizen or every transaction involving those countries is prohibited.

North Korea faces a different combination of national restrictions and United Nations Security Council sanctions re-

lating to its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes. Those UN measures carry a different legal basis from restrictions imposed independently by individual governments.

The countries’ circumstances therefore cannot be treated as identical. What connects the debate is the question of how economic restrictions affect ordinary people, including those with no involvement in the conduct cited to justify sanctions.

A major concern is overcompliance—when banks, insurers or suppliers avoid transactions beyond what sanctions actually require.

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has warned that such practices can obstruct humanitarian financial transfers and the delivery of essential goods, even where legitimate activities are permitted. This provides an important distinction between the formal scope of sanctions and their possible wider effects.

For Zimbabwean businesses, the practical stakes include dependable payment channels, access to equipment, affordable finance and confidence among trading partners. Establishing the contribution of sanctions to any particular economic difficulty, however, requires evidence alongside consideration of other economic conditions.

President Mnangagwa’s proposed response places regional integration at the centre of economic resilience.

“Through SADC and COMESA, opportunities are numerous to expand

markets, improve regional connectivity and strengthen cooperation in trade, industry, agriculture, energy and infrastructure,” he says.

For farmers, that approach could mean more buyers and stronger links to processors. For manufacturers, it could create opportunities to supply larger regional markets. For consumers, improved transport, energy cooperation and more competitive production could support more reliable supplies.

Those benefits depend on practical delivery: efficient borders, reliable infrastructure, consistent standards and competitive businesses.

The President also calls for greater value addition and beneficiation so that communities retain more of the wealth generated from their resources.

For developing countries facing external economic pressure, the wider argument is that political solidarity must be supported by productive capacity, diversified markets and partnerships that deliver measurable benefits.

Zimbabwe’s engagement policy, he says, remains open.

“We remain open to working with all countries and partners, who are willing to engage Zimbabwe based on mutual respect and win-win benefits.”

The address ultimately places responsibility for development alongside the demand for sanctions removal.

“The destiny of our beloved motherland, Zimbabwe, is in our hands.”



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Deputy Minister Hon Mavunga Builds Bridges Through Beijing Exchange

Abel Karowangoro

Deputy Minister of Local Government and Public Works Honourable Albert Tawanda Mavunga's completion of a governance programme at Peking University highlights the growing contribution of Zimbabwe-China cooperation to leadership development and the strengthening of public institutions.

The achievement reflects a partnership that continues to expand beyond infrastructure and investment into skills development, knowledge exchange and cooperation in governance, supporting Government's national development agenda.

Deputy Minister Mavunga participated in Peking University's 13th Workshop on Governance under the Dongfang Scholarships Programme. His reflections, published in the programme's Autumn 2026 final report, describe the experience as "liberating and inspiring".

Following completion of the programme, he said he had received a certificate in governance and had been elected a deputy ambassador within the Dongfang scholarship community.

"I graduated and got my certificate on governance," Deputy Minister Mavunga said.

His achievement demonstrates the importance of international educational exchanges in equipping public officials with broader perspectives, professional networks and knowledge relevant to their responsibilities.

For Zimbabwe, such opportunities complement Government's efforts to build capable institutions and advance the transformation envisaged under President Emmerson Mnangagwa's Vision 2030.

Learning in Support of National Development

In his contribution, titled Understanding China, Deputy Minister Mavunga reflects on 30 days of study and visits examining leadership, governance and development.

"If I was to summarize my last 30 days in China I would start by saying it was liberating and inspiring," he wrote.

His account emphasises the importance of understanding governance within a country's particular historical, political and economic circumstances.

That perspective has practical relevance for Zimbabwe's development journey. International cooperation can provide valuable lessons while allowing national institutions to determine how those lessons fit local priorities, laws and community needs.

Deputy Minister Mavunga's reflections also associate China's development achievements with consistency of

leadership, organisational strength and sustained implementation.

For an official serving in the local government portfolio, these themes connect directly with public administration and service delivery.

Local authorities carry responsibilities that affect citizens every day, including settlement planning, infrastructure management and the coordination of essential services. Strengthening administrative capacity can therefore help support the implementation of Government programmes at community level.

The programme offers an opportunity to examine approaches that could inform that work, subject to their suitability for Zimbabwe's circumstances.

Representing Zimbabwe in an International Community

The Dongfang Scholarship Programme, established in 2019, forms part of Peking University's international educational engagement.

Accounts of earlier cohorts describe learning in leadership, governance, public policy, administration and politics, alongside the development of cultural, diplomatic and analytical skills.

Such exchanges bring together participants with different national experiences, creating opportunities to discuss common challenges and approaches to development.

Deputy Minister Mavunga's reported election as a deputy ambassador within the scholarship community adds a representative dimension to his participation.

The role belongs to the programme's community and provides a platform for continued engagement with fellow participants. It also offers an opportunity to sustain professional relationships beyond the period of study.

His participation brings a Zimbabwean perspective into these discussions, demonstrating that international exchange is a two-way process in which the country both learns and contributes.

A Friendship Grounded in History

Deputy Minister Mavunga's achievement sits within a longstanding relationship between Zimbabwe and China.

The two countries established diplomatic relations on April 18, 1980, the day Zimbabwe attained independence. In 2018, their relationship was elevated to a comprehensive strategic partnership of cooperation.

That partnership has supported cooperation across infrastructure, energy, communications and education.



The countries' September 2024 joint statement identifies the China-aided New Parliament Building and National Pharmaceutical Warehouse, together with the China-funded Hwange Power Station expansion, Robert Gabriel Mugabe International Airport expansion and NetOne National Mobile Broadband Phase III project, among examples of practical cooperation.

These undertakings illustrate the breadth of a relationship directed towards development priorities.

Educational exchanges complement such investment. Infrastructure requires skilled people and effective institutions to plan projects, manage assets and ensure that facilities continue serving the public.

The development of leadership and administrative expertise is therefore an important component of the wider partnership.

The 2024 joint statement also commits both countries to strengthening exchanges between governments, legislatures and political parties, including the sharing of governance experience.

Deputy Minister Mavunga's participation is consistent with that emphasis on institutional cooperation and mutual learning.

Education Strengthens People-to-People Ties

The educational relationship extends beyond public officials to students and professionals whose skills can contribute to national development.

On August 26, 2026, Chinese Ambassador to Zimbabwe Zhou Ding hosted

an awards ceremony for Chinese Government Scholarships and China-Zimbabwe Friendship Scholarships, attended by Higher and Tertiary Education Minister Frederick Shava, education representatives and scholarship recipients.

According to the Chinese Embassy's account, Ambassador Zhou encouraged recipients to use their opportunities to contribute to Zimbabwe's development. Minister Shava highlighted the contribution of educational cooperation to skills development and innovation among young Zimbabweans.

These exchanges give practical meaning to diplomatic relations.

For participants, cooperation becomes an opportunity to gain knowledge, develop professionally and build an understanding of another society. For the country, the potential benefit grows when returning scholars share their expertise and apply it in public institutions, industry and communities.

Deputy Minister Mavunga's experience illustrates this connection between individual achievement and national service.

Taking Zimbabwe's Development Message Abroad

During his time in Beijing, Deputy Minister Mavunga also contributed to international discussions on cooperation among developing countries.

Hurumende News Hub reported on September 21 that, addressing a Global South symposium in the Chinese capital, he called for stronger cooperation, greater technology exchange and increased local processing of natural

resources.

His presentation drew on President Mnangagwa's emphasis on citizens taking ownership of national development.

That contribution connected Zimbabwe's development philosophy with broader debates about how developing economies can strengthen production, retain greater value from their resources and build mutually beneficial partnerships.

It also demonstrated the value of officials using international platforms to articulate national priorities while engaging with the experiences of other countries.

Deputy Minister Mavunga's graduation marks the completion of an educational programme and opens opportunities for continued professional exchange.

Its wider significance lies in how the knowledge gained can support his responsibilities in Government, inform engagement with colleagues and contribute to stronger public administration.

Alongside major infrastructure projects, the Zimbabwe-China partnership is investing in people whose decisions help shape development outcomes.

For Deputy Minister Mavunga, the experience in China provides further knowledge and international connections to draw upon in public service. His achievement reflects a friendship increasingly expressed through both the infrastructure being built and the leadership capacity being developed to serve the nation.

Malawi Crisis Deepens as Opposition Questions President's Absence

Hurumende News Hub

Malawi's opposition has called on the government to explain President Peter Mutharika's extended stay in South Africa, as the country grapples with fuel shortages, electricity blackouts and worsening economic pressures.

The 86-year-old president travelled to South Africa on October 6 for what authorities described as a private visit. The trip is reportedly his fifth to the neighbouring country this year, with officials providing limited details about his previous visits.

The opposition Malawi Congress Party (MCP) said the country needed clear leadership and decisive action to address the challenges facing citizens.

"Malawi is at a critical moment, and there is a need for decisive action," the party said.

However, Information Minister Shadric Namalomba dismissed suggestions that the president's absence had left the country without effective leadership.

Mutharika (pictured) returned to office in October last year after defeating former president Lazarus Chakwera. He previously led Malawi from 2014 to 2020.

His latest trip has intensified questions

about his frequent visits to South Africa, particularly as economic difficulties continue to affect households and businesses.

Speaking to journalists in Lilongwe on Thursday, MCP campaign director Moses Kunkuyu said the opposition was not challenging the president's right to travel privately. Instead, he called on Vice-President Jane Ansah to address the nation and explain how the government was responding to the country's mounting problems.

Kunkuyu said citizens needed reassurance that the country's affairs were being managed effectively.

"The issue is not that the president has travelled," he said. "The issue is that people are suffering and want reassurance that somebody is in charge."

He cited persistent fuel shortages, regular power cuts, inadequate supplies of essential medicines in public hospitals and limited access to foreign currency as issues requiring urgent government attention.

Responding to the criticism, Namalomba told local media that the president remained in control of government business despite being outside the country.

"A state president is always in charge at any time, anywhere," the minister said.



When asked about the purpose of Mutharika's visit, he maintained that the trip was private.

"A private trip is private," he said.

The minister also accused the opposition of criticising the government over problems he said had originated during

its previous tenure.

"May I request them to seal their mouths as we address the problems they miserably created and failed to solve," he added.

Mutharika's absence has also affected Malawi's representation at regional engagements. On Thursday, he assigned

the country's trade minister to lead its delegation to the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) summit in Zimbabwe.

Earlier this month, government officials also dismissed social media reports claiming that the president had travelled from South Africa to India for medical treatment.

Chief Secretary to the Government Justin Saidi said Mutharika was still in South Africa and urged the public to avoid circulating unverified claims.

The president has previously rejected speculation about his health, describing the allegations as "silly and laughable" while insisting that he was in good health.

Meanwhile, Malawi continues to face a shortage of foreign currency, affecting its ability to import fuel and contributing to higher transport costs.

The crisis has led to long queues at petrol stations, while unreliable electricity supplies and shortages of medicines have further increased public frustration.

The opposition's demand for an explanation has therefore placed renewed focus on the government's response to the economic crisis and the need to reassure citizens that urgent measures are being taken to address their daily hardships.

A woman with dark hair, wearing a white sweater, is smiling broadly and celebrating. She is holding a smartphone in her left hand and has her right fist clenched in a celebratory gesture. Numerous US dollar bills are shown falling through the air around her, creating a sense of wealth and success. The background is a dark blue gradient with some light streaks.

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TOGETHER-PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

HM PROOF

Ministry in digital cadastre push

Itai Mazire

The Mines Ministry has shut its doors to walk-in visitors at the Deputy Cadastre Registrar's Office indefinitely, a drastic administrative squeeze designed to force through the final rollout of a digital mining title system that has languished for over a decade.

Secretary for Mines and Mining Development Dr. Thomas Utete Wushe announced that effective Monday, 26 October 2026, the office will cease attending to the public until further notice, directing all applications and supporting documents to be lodged through provincial mining directors instead .

The closure is the clearest signal yet that the government is prioritising the completion of its Electronic Cadastre system over immediate public access, a trade-off officials say is necessary to eliminate the boundary disputes and double allocations that have long plagued the sector.

"The temporary measure will enable staff to accelerate the implementation of the digital Mining Title Management System, which will improve the speed, transparency, accuracy and security of mining title administration," said Dr Wushe.

The digital cadastre, known variously as the Electronic Cadastre or the Mining Cadastre Information Management System-is a centralised electronic registry intended to replace Zimbabwe's fragmented paper-based system.

It maps every mining right, from small-scale gold claims to large concessions, onto a single platform using survey-grade coordinates, theoretically making it impossible for two parties to hold overlapping titles .



The project has been in development for over a decade, repeatedly delayed by funding shortfalls, data verification challenges, and institutional resistance.

As recently as February 2026, officials confirmed the system was finally on track for launch this year after the government secured funding and procured equipment .

By June, Dr Wushe was demonstrating the platform to mining executives at

the Chamber of Mines conference in Victoria Falls, revealing that roughly 60 percent of required data had already been uploaded .

The suspension of walk-in services appears aimed at clearing the remaining backlog.

A parallel 90-day exercise launched on 15 October is currently capturing missing survey coordinates from title holders across provincial offices, a prerequisite for the cadastre to function accurately .

Beyond the administrative reshuffle, the notice carries a pointed anti-corruption warning.

Dr Wushe said the Ministry has not appointed any agents and charges no fee to facilitate access to the office.

"The Ministry has not appointed any agents and does not charge any fee to facilitate access to the Office. Report any such solicitation to the toll-free line above, ZACC or the police," he said .

That warning lands against a backdrop of persistent fraud in Zimbabwe's mining claims sector.

In August 2026, a man appeared in a Chinhoyi court accused of duping a prospective miner of USD 15 800 by falsely claiming he could expedite claim registration .

The Ministry's own officials have faced public pressure to clean up provincial licensing processes, with First Lady Dr Auxillia Mnangagwa publicly directing Wushe in June to investigate corruption allegations involving provincial mining directors .

The Ministry said a further public notice will advise when walk-in services resume, offering no timeline for that resumption .

Turn 8.3% growth Into jobs, not paperwork

Itai Mazire

Industry and Commerce Minister Honorable Nqobizitha Mangaliso Ndhlovu last week, opened his ministry's 2026 Strategic Plan Review Workshop with a blunt challenge to officials, convert Zimbabwe's headline growth numbers into factories running fuller, exports earning more and households feeling the difference.

The workshop, held in Bulawayo on Friday, comes against a backdrop of rare economic momentum. Zimbabwe's economy grew by 8.3 percent in 2025, while manufacturing capacity utilisation climbed to 61.2 percent in the first half of 2026, up from 57.3 percent the previous year.

Manufactured exports reached approximately US\$593 million by August 2026, figures the Minister described as encouraging but insufficient on their own.

"Our task is not simply to plan activities, but to agree on practical actions that strengthen production, improve competitiveness, expand trade and create opportunities for our people," Hon. Ndhlovu told the gathering.

The Minister pointed to four Cabi-

net-approved policy frameworks- covering industrial development, local content, consumer protection and quality standards and directed departments to align their budgets, work plans and performance contracts with measurable targets.

The instruction carries weight-Zimbabwe's industrial policy landscape has historically suffered from well-drafted strategies that stall at implementation, with capacity utilisation recovering only slowly since the COVID-19 era lows.

Hon. Ndhlovu made clear that the benchmark for the review is not paperwork but lived outcomes.

"Success must be reflected in stronger enterprises, more competitive products, expanding markets, productive employment and improved livelihoods for the people of Zimbabwe," he said.

The 61.2 percent capacity utilisation figure, while an improvement, still leaves more than a third of the manufacturing sector's productive capacity idle, a gap the Ministry's strategic review is ostensibly designed to close.

The USD 593 million in manufactured exports by August also remains modest relative to the country's import bill,



underscoring the competitiveness challenge the Minister flagged.

The workshop's emphasis on measurable performance contracts signals a push to bind departmental accountability to the National Development Strategy 2 targets, as Zimbabwe pursues its Vision 2030 ambition of upper-middle-income status. Whether the Bulawayo deliberations produce binding commitments or another round of aspirational documents will be tested when the ministry's next performance cycle is reviewed.

Zimbabwe Must Turn COMESA Leadership Into Economic Gains

Regional leadership carries its greatest value when it improves the lives of ordinary people. For Zimbabwe, the COMESA chairmanship presents an opportunity to help turn the promise of regional integration into stronger businesses, productive investment and more jobs.

The relationship between Zimbabwe and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa should therefore be understood through practical economic interests. It concerns the ability of a local manufacturer to reach customers beyond the country's borders, a farmer to secure a reliable market and a small trader to move goods through a border without unnecessary expense.

President Emmerson Mnangagwa's chairmanship offers a platform to advance those priorities. The responsibility is to build agreement among member states and encourage implementation of commitments that make regional trade work.

The theme "One Market, One Future" expresses a worthwhile ambition. Its credibility will depend on what businesses and citizens experience when they attempt to participate in that market.

For Zimbabwe, the starting point must be production.

Access to regional customers creates opportunities only when local enterprises can supply goods consistently, meet required standards and offer competitive prices. Market access must therefore be supported by investment in electricity, transport, technology and industrial capacity.

Our view is that the chairmanship should strengthen the connection between regional diplomacy and domestic economic delivery.

Trade discussions should inform the support given to exporters. Engagement with regional partners should identify specific opportunities for Zimbabwean producers. Agreements should be followed by clear information explaining how businesses can benefit.

A manufacturer needs to know which products qualify for preferential treatment, what documentation is required and where to seek assistance when difficulties arise. A small enterprise requires guidance that is accessible and affordable.

These practical services deserve as much attention as high-level meetings.

Border efficiency should be another central priority.

Delays, repeated procedures and unpredictable administrative costs weaken competitiveness. They tie up working capital, disrupt deliveries and make it harder for smaller businesses to maintain relationships with customers.

Zimbabwe should use its regional leadership to encourage coordinated border procedures, greater transparency and effective mechanisms for resolving trading difficulties.

Digitisation can help, provided systems communicate with one another and simplify the experience of users. Moving a compli-

cated process onto a computer does little for a trader if the same delays and repeated requirements remain.

The objective should be measurable improvement: clearer procedures, predictable charges and faster movement of legitimate goods.

Regional integration must also create room for smaller enterprises.

Too often, discussions about international trade appear distant from the workshop, market stall or small processing business. Yet these enterprises can contribute to regional commerce when they receive appropriate information, finance and assistance with standards.

Women and young entrepreneurs should be able to identify genuine pathways into regional markets. Business associations, financial institutions and relevant public agencies have an important role in making those pathways visible.

Zimbabwe's relationship with COMESA can become more valuable if participation extends beyond established exporters.

A further priority is the development of regional value chains.

Member states have an opportunity to strengthen production through complementary activities: supplying inputs, processing materials, manufacturing components and distributing finished goods.

Zimbabwe should pursue partnerships that expand domestic value addition and con-

nect local firms to these wider production networks.

That requires careful attention to commercial viability. A regional initiative should have identifiable producers, customers, infrastructure requirements and investment commitments. Broad declarations need to be translated into workable projects.

Standards are equally important.

Businesses entering new markets must demonstrate that their products meet applicable requirements. Zimbabwe should encourage cooperation that makes those requirements clear and reduces avoidable duplication while protecting consumers.

Domestically, producers need access to reliable testing, certification and technical advice. These services can determine whether a promising enterprise becomes an exporter or remains excluded from regional opportunities.

Investment promotion should follow the same practical approach.

Expressions of interest are useful beginnings. Their economic value emerges when projects secure financing, meet regulatory requirements and begin operating.

Government and business should focus on investments that strengthen productive capacity, develop skills and create durable commercial relationships. Progress should be assessed through implementation and results.

Zimbabwe's chairmanship also requires a

regional outlook.

COMESA leadership is a responsibility to serve shared interests. Zimbabwe will gain credibility by listening to other member states, helping resolve common constraints and supporting arrangements that distribute opportunities fairly.

A more efficient regional market benefits local exporters precisely because neighbouring economies are also able to produce, purchase and trade more effectively.

The public should be able to follow this work.

Regular updates on agreed priorities, implementation progress and unresolved obstacles would help businesses plan and allow citizens to assess the value of regional engagement.

The chairmanship should leave behind stronger cooperation and practical improvements that continue after Zimbabwe's term ends.

For Hurumende News Hub, the editorial priority is clear: regional leadership must be judged by economic delivery.

More competitive producers, accessible export opportunities, efficient borders and investment that reaches implementation would give substance to Zimbabwe's relationship with COMESA.

The opportunity is significant. The task now is to convert political commitment into benefits that enterprises, workers and households can recognise.




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Zim Takes Global Stage at Routes World 2026

The Airports Company of Zimbabwe (ACZ) is positioned the nation at the center of global air connectivity, exhibiting at Routes World 2026, held from 21–23 October in Frankfurt, Germany.

Led by CEO Mr. T. Gusha, the ACZ delegation is joined by partners for success, including the National Handling Services (NHS), the Civil Aviation Authority of Zimbabwe (CAAZ), and the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority (ZTA).

The delegation engaged international

carriers and industry leaders under the frameworks of ACI World, ICAO, and IATA to advance African aviation priorities.

Key focus areas include regional connectivity, safety, and the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM).

The strategic push is aimed at expanding direct flight routes, driving tourism, attracting foreign investment and cementing Zimbabwe’s role as a primary Southern African trade hub.

Single Mothers Deserve Support, Not Stigma - Mabhena

The founder of Zimbabwe Liberated Girl Child in Action (ZLGCA), Mrs Annah Mabhena, has called for greater support, empowerment and recognition of single mothers, saying their circumstances should not define their worth or limit their participation in the country's socio-economic development – a message she delivered Friday at a meet-and-greet gathering of single mothers held as part of Breast Cancer Awareness Month activities.

The event brought together women from different backgrounds to share experiences, encourage one another and discuss ways of addressing the challenges faced by single mothers.

In her address, Mrs Mabhena said ZLGCA was committed to promoting sisterhood, solidarity and practical interventions aimed at improving the lives of single mothers. She noted that rapid technological developments and changing social practices were increasingly encouraging individualism, warning that communities risked losing the African values of Ubuntu and communalism if people abandoned their shared responsibility towards one another.

"The African traditional concepts of communalism and Ubuntu can only be eroded if we forget that we are all brothers and sisters. I want you to know that we are together as a sisterhood with our brothers, devoted to finding solutions and interventions to support the single mother in her challenges," she said.

Mrs Mabhena said ZLGCA was determined to ensure that single mothers were heard, supported and given opportunities to contribute meaningfully to national development. She emphasised that the organisation was not promoting single motherhood, but rather encouraging and empowering women who found themselves raising children without a husband.

"As ZLGCA, we are not here to encourage single motherhood, but we want to encourage single mothers. There is a difference," she said.

Mrs Mabhena observed that although society often treated people as though they faced similar challenges, single mothers experienced particular difficulties that required targeted interventions and understanding. She highlighted the stigma, neglect and ridicule that some single mothers encounter, adding that many were forced to balance personal challenges, family

responsibilities, employment and the demands of raising children with limited resources. According to Mrs Mabhena, these pressures can contribute to emotional exhaustion, financial difficulties and difficult life choices.

She said ZLGCA wanted to create a supportive environment in which women could openly discuss their experiences, identify solutions and pursue opportunities for personal growth and economic empowerment. The founder urged the women to remain determined despite their circumstances, encouraging them to take an active role in shaping their futures and contributing to Zimbabwe's development.

"ZLGCA is here today to listen and support. Rise up, girl child, take your stand and be counted," she said.

Mrs Mabhena also outlined the organisation's purpose and empowerment programmes, encouraging participants to take advantage of initiatives designed to support single mothers and improve their socio-economic circumstances. The gathering also incorporated Breast Cancer Awareness Month activities, providing an opportunity to encourage women to prioritise their health and well-being.

Television personality Nyasha Mutangamira, who was among the speakers at the gathering, encouraged single mothers to maintain their self-worth and dignity regardless of their marital circumstances.

The gathering comes as ZLGCA, which draws much of its membership from daughters of liberation war veterans, has intensified its broader empowerment footprint over recent months. The organisation, which was formed to support girls and women who are often disadvantaged by the loss or incapacitation of parents during the liberation struggle, has moved beyond mere advocacy into practical skills and livelihood interventions.

In January 2026, ZLGCA launched a free driving and road safety training programme in Bulawayo targeting 10,000 girls nationwide, with the long-term goal of reaching 50,000 by 2030. The initiative, done in partnership with the Traffic Safety Council of Zimbabwe, is designed to address idleness and poverty, which the organisation identifies as key drivers of substance abuse and early marriages among young women. Mrs Mabhena framed the driving programme as part of a holistic approach that also includes financial



literacy, emotional intelligence and business skills training.

Earlier, in late 2024, ZLGCA reported that it had established viable in-

come-generating projects, including poultry and farming, and had provided direct financial support to some girls. The organisation has also been active in health and welfare outreach, donat-

ing blankets, baby clothes, sanitary pads and other supplies to mothers and babies at Mpilo Central Hospital and United Bulawayo Hospitals.

Zimbabwe, Armenia Eye Partnership in ICT, Education

Takudzwa Karwangoro

Zimbabwe and Armenia are considering new areas of cooperation in environmental protection, forestry, wildlife conservation, education, information and communication technology (ICT) and investment.

The discussions took place between Zimbabwe's Environment, Climate and Wildlife Minister Evelyn Ndllovu and her Armenian counterpart, Hambardzum Matevosyan, on the sidelines of the 17th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (COP17) in Yerevan.

Minister Ndllovu said the two countries were considering signing a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to establish a formal framework for cooperation in environmental management, forestry, parks and wildlife.

"We agreed that we can sign an MoU to cooperate in the areas of forestry, environmental management, and parks and

wildlife. We also discussed possibilities for cooperation in ICT, which they are looking into," she said.

The talks also focused on investment opportunities and cooperation in education, including the possible establishment of educational institutions.

The proposed partnership could combine Zimbabwe's experience in education and curriculum development with Armenia's expertise in ICT.

Matevosyan said the meeting had created an opportunity for the two countries to identify ways of strengthening their relationship through investment and other joint initiatives.

"The bilateral meeting allowed us to discuss various issues and explore opportunities to deepen and strengthen our partnership through different investments and other forms of cooperation. So, I am very glad that your delegation is in Arme-

nia, and we will be working closely with you," he said.

Armenia is hosting COP17 from October 19 to 30, 2026, with participating countries reviewing progress towards implementing the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and strengthening efforts to stop and reverse biodiversity loss.

On the sidelines of the conference, Ndllovu also held discussions with the Secretary-General of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands and took part in Water and Biodiversity Day.

She highlighted the role of local communities in restoring degraded wetlands, saying their participation and traditional knowledge were essential to achieving lasting results.

"Our communities are very critical to the recovery of wetlands. Without their input, we cannot restore our wetlands. We greatly appreciate the knowledge systems that



exist within our communities," she said.

Hon. Ndllovu added that wetlands should be viewed as an important component of the broader ecosystem, with community involvement and cooperation playing a key role in their restoration.

The latest engagement builds on diplomatic efforts between Zimbabwe and Armenia, which held their first political consultations earlier this year.

The consultations were co-chaired by Armenian Deputy Foreign Minister Robert Abisoghomonian and Zimbabwe's Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Ambassador Albert Chimbindi.

The process followed the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the two countries' foreign ministries to provide a framework for regular political consultations.

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Anti-Sanctions day roars to life

... As SADC rallies behind Zimbabwe

Itai Mazire

The red dust of Mashonaland Central yesterday rose, not from the tyres of trucks hauling gold ore, but from the footsteps of diplomats, politicians and ordinary citizens converging on Chi-padze Stadium for a ritual of regional defiance that has become as fixed in the SADC calendar as the rains.

Zimbabwe hosts the SADC Anti-Sanctions Solidarity Day on 25 October 2026 under a theme that pivots deliberately from grievance to strategy: "Leveraging Regional Integration and Global Partnerships for Economic Transformation Beyond Illegal Sanctions."

The choice of Bindura, a provincial capital rooted in tobacco and gold, not a glossy conference hall in Harare, signals that this year's commemoration is meant to speak to the productive heartland rather than the diplomatic drawing room.

The day itself is a creature of the 39th SADC Summit, held in Dar es Salaam in August 2019, when Heads of State

endorsed October 25 as a standing regional platform to demand the unconditional lifting of Western sanctions on Zimbabwe.

The proposal is widely credited to the late Tanzanian President John Magufuli, whose instinct for collective African pushback found fertile ground among a region that had watched Zimbabwe's isolation deepen for nearly two decades.

Since then, the date has been marked annually, but the regional bloc has not confined its protest to a single day.

At the 44th Summit hosted by Zimbabwe at the New Parliament Building in Mt Hampden, leaders renewed the call in their communiqué, stating that the sanctions "continue to hinder the progress and prosperity of the people of the Republic of Zimbabwe and the SADC region".

The architecture of the sanctions regime is itself a study in graduated pressure. The United States imposed the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act in 2001, directing

American representatives at international financial institutions to oppose lending and debt relief to Harare.

A 2003 executive order added targeted designations, and the European Union followed with its own restrictive measures in 2002.

The trigger, as Harare and its allies tell it, was the Fast Track Land Reform Programme—a redistribution of farmland from white commercial farmers to landless black Zimbabweans that Western capitals cast as a rupture of property rights and governance norms.

The collateral consequences, Zimbabwean officials argue, have been indiscriminate: blocked access to IMF and World Bank windows, severed correspondent banking relationships, and a risk premium that has made borrowing prohibitively expensive.

The human cost has been quantified, contested, and repeated. A 2021 report by UN Special Rapporteur Alena Douhan estimated the cumulative cost of sanctions at US\$100 billion and noted that Zimbabwe's borrowing costs

ran more than 1 000 percent above the average in most countries. Washington has consistently maintained that its measures are targeted at specific individuals and entities rather than the broader economy.

Yet even a former US ambassador to Harare, Charles Ray, acknowledged in a recent analysis that ZDERA "created an environment that led many American investors to adopt more conservative de-risking policies toward Zimbabwe". That admission cuts against the cleaner official narrative that sanctions hurt only the connected few.

Yesterday's proceedings in Bindura will be framed around the NDS2 and Vision 2030 development blueprints, with emphasis on regional value chains, tariff reduction and the removal of non-tariff barriers that throttle intra-SADC trade.

The subtext is that Zimbabwe cannot wait indefinitely for Western capitals to relent.

As President Mnangagwa has put it, "Nyika inovakwa nevene vayo"—the country is built by its owners. The Bin-

dura crowd will hear that refrain echoed alongside the more combative "Sanctions Must Go!!". But the theme's turn toward integration and partnerships suggests a subtle recalibration: less a plea to Washington, more a summons to Lusaka, Gaborone, Dar es Salaam and Pretoria to treat Zimbabwe's economic re-entry as a regional project rather than a bilateral grievance.

Whether that recalibration translates into anything beyond a stadium full of speeches and a gala in the evening is the question that will linger after the crowds disperse. Sanctions have outlasted successive Zimbabwean administrations, multiple US presidents, and a global financial crisis.

The SADC day of solidarity has become an institution in its own right, predictable, well-attended, and thus far insufficient to move the levers of Western policy. What Bindura offers, beyond the symbolism, is a test of whether a region can turn an annual ritual of complaint into a coherent economic strategy.

The theme says it can. The sanctions, for now, say otherwise.



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TOGETHER-PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

Is It a Crime to Propose Love to a Female Police Officer on Duty?



A 30-year-old man's arrest in Lupane after allegedly expressing romantic interest in a female police officer has raised questions about whether proposing love to an officer in uniform while she is on duty is a criminal offence in Zimbabwe.

Under Zimbabwean law, proposing love to a police officer is not, by itself, a specific criminal offence. However, certain actions accompanying such an approach could result in criminal charges, depending on the circumstances.

The Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act [Chapter 9:23] contains provisions dealing with conduct that interferes with police officers carrying out their duties.

Section 178 addresses obstructing a public official through physical interference while the official is lawfully performing their duties. Section 184 deals with conduct that defeats or obstructs the course of justice, including hinder-

ing a police officer in the execution of their duties.

These provisions do not automatically criminalise a person for expressing romantic interest in an officer. The conduct must satisfy the requirements of the relevant offence.

For instance, peacefully approaching an officer and expressing romantic interest would be different from threatening her, physically obstructing her work or engaging in other unlawful conduct.

The fact that a police officer is wearing a uniform and is on duty does not, on its own, make a romantic proposal a criminal offence.

In the Lupane incident, the Zimbabwe Republic Police confirmed the arrest of the 30-year-old man, who allegedly approached two female officers while they were performing their duties and expressed interest in one of them.

Speaking to ZBC News after his arrest, the man said he had been captivated by the officer's beauty.

"Love is blind. You never know where you will find the person you love. I just fell in love the moment I saw the beautiful police officer," he said.

Police said the suspect was assisting with investigations.

However, the specific charge against him had not been established from the information available about the incident.

The legal position is that a love proposal alone does not automatically constitute a crime under Zimbabwean law. To determine whether the suspect committed an offence, the circumstances of the encounter and the specific allegations forming the basis of the arrest would need to be established.

ZRP's 'Stock Thief Hot Pursuit' yields nearly 5 800 arrests



Itai Mazire

A nationwide police crackdown targeting livestock theft has yielded nearly 5 800 arrests and the recovery of hundreds of animals and massive quantities of illegal meat.

Operation "Stock Thief Hot Pursuit," which commenced on 1 October 2026, is producing "positive results country-wide," said National Police Spokesperson, Commissioner Paul Nyathi.

As of 14 October 2026, police had arrested a total of 5 780 individuals. While only 86 of those arrests were specifically for stock theft, a massive 5 694 were collared for other stock-related offences.

Detailing the geographic spread of the operation, Commissioner Nyathi highlighted the distinct provincial arrest figures.

"Harare Province emerged as the epicenter of the crackdown's secondary offences, recording zero specific stock thefts but leading the nation with 1 859 arrests for other stock-related crimes, bringing its total to 1 860."

"Mashonaland West followed with 701 total arrests, while Mashonaland Central recorded 604.

"Conversely, Mashonaland East recorded the highest number of specific stock theft arrests at 26, followed by Mashonaland West with 12, and both

Matabeleland South and Midlands with 11 each," said Commissioner Nyathi.

"Bulawayo recorded no specific stock thefts, but logged 536 arrests for related offences."

"The remaining provincial totals are as follows: Manicaland (445), Masvingo (418), Midlands (391), Matabeleland South (244), and Matabeleland North (100)," he said.

In addition to the arrests, police recovered a significant amount of stolen property and livestock during the period. Officers rescued 117 cattle, 31 goats, and 23 donkeys.

The operation also intercepted large quantities of processed meat intended for illegal sale.

Recovered items included a staggering 1 554 kilogrammes of beef, 102.5 kilogrammes of chicken, 160 kilogrammes of fish, 21.5 kilogrammes of goat meat, 31 kilogrammes of pork, three kilogrammes of trotters, three road runners, seven kilogrammes of mince meat and two kilogrammes of sausages.

Commissioner Nyathi revealed that legal proceedings are already underway for many of the suspects.

A total of 5,698 offenders paid deposit fines, 56 were sent to court, 25 were detained and one minor was released into the custody of their parents.



Five Arrested Over Alleged Bulawayo Robbery Spree

Five men have been arrested in Bulawayo in connection with a series of alleged armed robberies in which cash was stolen from several premises.

The suspects include Bobby Juwawu (36), of Hillside, Bulawayo, Lerato Takane (36), Forward Dube and Thabo Ndlovu, who are all reportedly from Johannesburg, South Africa.

They appeared before Bulawayo Regional Magistrate Ms Sibongile Marondedze facing robbery charges.

Prosecutors allege that the suspects first targeted a local company, where they allegedly searched the premises and stole approximately US\$13,000.

They are further accused of carrying out additional robberies on the same day, during which US\$300 and 700 Chinese yuan were reportedly stolen.

The alleged robbery spree was brought to an end after a worker alerted the police during a third incident at around 2.30pm.

The tip-off reportedly led to the suspects' arrest.

The five men remain in custody as investigations into the alleged robberies continue.

FREEMAN'S BIG NIGHT...

HKD Festival puts Zimbabwean music centre stage at Glamis Arena



IN HIS ELEMENT:
Freeman HKD performs as fans cheer and capture the moment on their phones

ADLLIED KUDZAI KUMIRE.

Freeman HKD has given Zimbabwe's entertainment scene a major talking point after Saturday's third edition of the HKD Festival at Glamis Arena in Harare, with organisers reporting a sold-out gathering of more than 20,000 fans.

The October 24 festival placed the musician at the centre of an ambitious celebration of local talent, strengthening his case as an artist whose influence now extends beyond recording music to building a platform for fellow entertainers. The attendance figure is the organisers' estimate and has not been independently verified.

For Freeman, the significance of the occasion reaches beyond the numbers. A festival carrying an artist's own brand presents a demanding test: can the following built through songs sustain a larger event with its own identity?

The HKD Festival's return for a third edition gives that question fresh relevance. It offers Freeman an opportunity to turn the connection with his supporters into an annual meeting point for Zimbabwean music.

In a message published on the festival website, Freeman and his management thanked supporters, crediting their enthusiasm and unity for the occasion's success. The organisers said official

photographs, a recap video and live sets would follow.

The festival's appeal was built around a broad musical invitation. Its advertised programme brought together Freeman and the HKD Band with artists including Nutty O, Holy Ten, Feli Nandi, Enzo Ishall, Seh Calaz, Baba Harare and Jnr Spragga.

Other names on the announced bill included Nisha Ts, Delroy Shewe, Nyasha David, Blot, Da Ruler and InTotal Band. The programme positioned the event across dancehall, hip-hop, Afro-pop and live-band music, rather than around a single sound.

That breadth matters. A festival can introduce an artist to listeners who arrived to support somebody else. It creates possibilities for musical discovery and gives performers a shared platform on which different audiences can meet.

The weekend also came with a new creative chapter for Freeman. Ahead of the festival, he announced that his 14th studio album, *Peace*, would be released on October 23.

Explaining its direction before the event, he said: "Sometimes the heart

itself needs peace." His stated focus included peace within individuals, communities and countries, giving the festival weekend a reflective theme alongside its entertainment appeal.

Freeman had also acknowledged the practical demands of hosting an expanding event. In pre-festival remarks, he said lessons from the first two editions were informing preparations, with particular attention to stage management, crowd management and the overall running of the show.

Those commitments provide a useful measure for assessing the festival as fuller accounts emerge. Audience size is one part of the story; the experience delivered to paying supporters will help determine its lasting reputation.

For Zimbabwean entertainment, the larger promise lies in continuity. An annual festival can become a dependable destination for audiences, an opportunity for performers and a recognisable property for commercial partners.

Saturday's edition has put that ambition firmly in view. Freeman's next challenge is to turn the attention surrounding his big night into lasting confidence in the HKD Festival—and give supporters a reason to return.

Danai Gurira Makes Emotional Return to Former Harare School



moved to Zimbabwe with her family in 1983.

She attended Dominican Convent before returning to the United States, where she pursued further studies at Macalester College and the Tisch School of the Arts.

Her acting career began in 2004 with an appearance in *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*. She later gained international recognition for portraying Michonne in the television series *The Walking Dead* and Okoye in *Marvel's Black Panther*.

Beyond acting, Gurira has also made significant contributions to theatre, including co-writing the award-winning play *In the Continuum*.

Dominican Convent welcomed her return, expressing appreciation for the opportunity to have one of its former students share her experiences with the next generation.

In a statement, the school said her visit encouraged learners to strive for excellence, take pride in their backgrounds and pursue opportunities across different professional fields.

Her return was a special moment for the institution, highlighting the journey from a Harare classroom to the international entertainment industry.

Hollywood actress Danai Gurira returned to her former school, Dominican Convent High School in Harare, on Friday, 23 October, where she encouraged learners to pursue their ambitions while remaining connected to their African heritage.

Gurira, who has established herself as an internationally recognised actress, spent time with students at the institution where she received part of her education, sharing experiences from her journey to international stardom.

During her interaction with the learners, she highlighted the value of determination, embracing one's cultural identity and ensuring that Africans take the lead in sharing their own stories with the world.

She also spoke about the influence of her Zimbabwean upbringing and education, crediting these experiences for helping shape her personal and professional journey.

Born in Grinnell, Iowa, in the United States, on 14 February 1978, Gurira



Hulengende And Wife Survive Road Accident Along Harare-Bindura Road

Musician Hulengende and his wife, Malloti, survived a road accident after their Mercedes-Benz was involved in a head-on collision with a Toyota Probox along the Harare-Bindura Road early this morning.

The accident reportedly occurred around 5:30am near Mapunga Farm as the couple were returning from a show.

The collision left Hulengende's Mercedes severely damaged, while passengers travelling in the Probox reportedly sustained serious injuries.

Fortunately, Hulengende and Malloti escaped the accident unharmed and have since returned home.

The couple were travelling in Hulengende's older Mercedes-Benz, not his recently acquired red car.

The incident has drawn attention to the dangers of travelling on the roads in the early hours of the morning, particularly after late-night entertainment events.

Further details surrounding the circumstances of the accident were not immediately available.

ZPCS Brings Back Commissioner-General's Sports Tournament After Nine Years

Takudzwa Karawangoro

The Zimbabwe Prisons and Correctional Service (ZPCS) is set to revive the Commissioner-General's Sports Tournament in Manicaland Province from December 10 to 14, 2026, following a nine-year break.

The competition, last held in 2017, is expected to bring together officers from across the country for contests in more than 16 sporting disciplines, including traditional games and a beauty pageant.

Preparations for the national event are underway, with officials recently meeting at the Forestry Commission offices in Mutare for a planning workshop chaired by National Sports Committee Chairperson Commissioner Alvord Gapare.

The meeting brought together Deputy National Sports Officer Chief Correctional Officer Edward Zamira, provincial sports officers and other stakeholders involved in organising the tournament.

In remarks delivered on her behalf by Provincial Sports Officer Chief Correctional Officer Cousinet Simunyu, ZPCS Manicaland Provincial Officer Commanding Commissioner Spetosomusa Chinobva welcomed Commissioner Gapare and his delegation, expressing optimism that the organising committee would deliver a successful event.

"We are rallying behind the committee and we are certain that today's deliberations shall deliver a memorable Commissioner-General's Sports Tournament," Commissioner Chinobva said.

Commissioner Gapare described the return of the tournament as an important development for the Service, urging organisers to ensure that all arrangements are handled professionally because the competition carries the



name of the Commissioner-General.

"This has been one of the most prestigious events that has been missing for a long time, so this year we are hosting it once again. Our preparations must be flawless, keeping in mind that the tournament carries the name of our Commissioner-General," he said.

He highlighted the role of sport in promoting physical fitness, relieving work-related pressure and strengthening relationships among officers

serving in different provinces.

According to Commissioner Gapare, sporting activities provide an opportunity for officers to interact beyond their usual professional responsibilities, helping to build trust, unity and cooperation.

He said the relationships developed through sporting competitions could improve teamwork and mutual support when officers return to their demanding duties.

Commissioner Gapare also emphasised the importance of prioritising officers' health and morale, describing the tournament as an investment in the Service's workforce and overall performance.

He called on provincial teams to encourage maximum participation in the December event while urging officers to avoid drug and substance abuse and embrace healthy lifestyles.

Delivering the vote of thanks, Chief Correctional Officer Simunyu expressed appreciation to the ZPCS management for supporting the planning workshop. She also acknowledged the contributions made by Commissioner Gapare, Chief Correctional Officer Zamira and other participants.

The workshop concluded with a tour of the proposed tournament venue as preparations continued for the return of the national sporting event.

Petro complete stunning comeback to knock Scotland out of CAF Champions League

Leeroy Willie

Petro de Luanda produced a remarkable comeback to overturn a two-goal first-leg deficit, beating Zimbabwean champions Scotland FC 3-0 in Luanda on Friday to seal a 3-2 aggregate victory and book their place in the CAF Champions League group stage.

Scotland arrived in Angola holding a 2-0 advantage from the first leg at the National Sports Stadium in Harare, where goals from Khama Billiat and Knowledge Musona had put Norman Mapeza's side on the brink of making history.

However, the Angolan giants responded emphatically in front of their home supporters, scoring three unanswered goals to complete the turnaround and end Scotland's dream of becoming only the fifth Zimbabwean club to reach the group stage after Dynamos, CAPS United, Monomotapa and FC Platinum.

Petro entered the decisive second leg

under new coach Alexandre Santos after parting ways with João Pedro Sousa following the defeat in Harare.

The coaching change proved significant as the hosts delivered a disciplined and clinical performance to erase the first-leg deficit.

For Scotland, the defeat brings to an end an impressive continental run that included eliminating Eswatini champions Nsingizini Hotspurs before pushing one of Africa's established clubs to the brink.

Despite falling short in Luanda, the Mabviravira made a strong statement in their maiden CAF Champions League campaign, with victories over Nsingizini and Petro in Harare highlighting their potential on the continental stage.

Petro now advance to the lucrative CAF Champions League group stage, while Scotland bow out with their heads held high after a historic run in Africa's premier club competition.



Petro complete stunning comeback to knock Scotland out of CAF Champions League

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President Hails Sables After Thrilling Namibia Victory

Staff Reporter

Zimbabwe's Sables held off a late Namibian comeback to secure a 36-33 victory at the National Sports Stadium yesterday, earning praise from President Emmerson Mnangagwa for their determination and composure.

The three-point win marked a successful return to international rugby at the Harare venue, with the President describing the result as an important step forward for the sport.

In a congratulatory message posted on his official X account, President Mnangagwa commended the national team's performance and thanked the players, technical staff and supporters.

"A massive congratulations to our Zimbabwe Sables on an incredible and hard-fought 36-33 victory over Namibia today!" he wrote.

The President said the occasion carried particular significance because it marked the team's first international appearance at the venue in more than two decades.

"Playing our first international match at this historic venue in over two decades, you showed true determination, resilience, and the unmistakable spirit of Zimbabwe," he said.

President Mnangagwa singled out the Sables' set-piece execution, lineout accuracy and tactical

kicking under pressure, crediting those aspects of their game with helping secure the narrow victory.

"From our clinical execution at the set pieces, precision in the lineouts, to the decisive tactical kicking under pressure, it was a masterful display of rugby," he said.

Namibia's fightback ensured a tense finish, with the Sables ultimately protecting their advantage to emerge victorious.

"Holding off a fierce comeback to secure this win right at the wire has made the entire nation immensely proud," the President said.

He also acknowledged the contribution of specta-

tors, saying thousands of supporters had turned out to rally behind the team.

"Thank you to the technical team, the players, and the thousands of fans who came out to lift our boys today. This is a monumental step forward for Zimbabwean rugby," he said.

The result gave the Sables a home victory over their regional rivals on an occasion that brought international rugby back to one of the country's most prominent sporting venues.

President Mnangagwa urged the team to build on the performance. "Keep flying the flag high, Sables! The journey continues."