



**STATEMENT BY HONOURABLE AMBASSADOR F.M. SHAVA,  
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE  
OF ZIMBABWE, AT THE TWENTY-FIRST ANNUAL MEETING OF  
MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE GROUP OF  
LANDLOCKED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES**

**22 SEPTEMBER 2022**

**Chairperson,**

**Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I wish to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, for assuming the stewardship of our Group. You can count on the full support of the Zimbabwe delegation during your tenure. Allow me to congratulate and thank our brother from Kazakhstan for the excellent leadership and the many initiatives launched during his very successful tenure.

I am delighted to contribute my national perspective as we exchange ideas and share experiences on how to advance the interests of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), focusing on our challenges and strategies for implementing the Vienna Programme of Action (VPoA), which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Zimbabwe is fully committed to the achievement of the targets of the VPoA, and other intergovernmental frameworks, as we strive to make the country more land-linked and attractive to investment. Zimbabwe's National Development blueprints have largely reflected much of the fundamental priorities identified in the VPoA, including, inter-alia, the issues of transit policy, infrastructure development and maintenance, international trade and trade facilitation, regional integration and cooperation and structural economic transformation.

**Chairperson,**

By virtue of being located at a very strategic position as a transit country within the Southern Africa subregion, Zimbabwe has harmonized transit policies in compliance with the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the Southern African Development

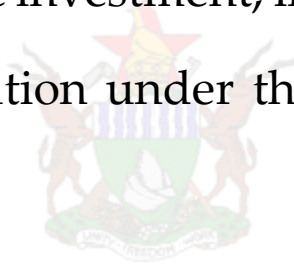
Community (SADC) protocols on transit trade, transit facilities and third-party motor vehicle insurance schemes. In addition, Zimbabwe is also establishing one-stop-border-posts to facilitate smooth transit of both people and goods across the country's borders. A study of one of the completed border posts, the Chirundu One-Stop-Border-Post, has shown that its establishment induced between US\$2.2 and US\$3.1 million of Zimbabwe's annual exports to Zambia.



### **Distinguished participants,**

In the area of infrastructure development and maintenance, Zimbabwe is currently upgrading and modernizing its road infrastructure along the major trade corridors that serve East and Southern Africa, linking it to the North-South transport Corridor. These efforts are meant to reduce transit time and costs, and also to improve competitiveness.

In the area of energy, the country is promoting the use of renewable energy in the form of solar generators, over and above the expansion of the current thermal and hydroelectric generation capacity. Great effort is being made to balance the need for climate sustainability and quality and affordable investment, in line with our National Determined Contribution under the auspices of the Paris Agreement.



### **Distinguished participants,**

Zimbabwe has undertaken many and varied reforms to promote and facilitate investment. These, inter-alia, provide for pre-and-post investment facilitation and protection. We have also embarked on Ease of Doing Business reforms, aimed at reducing the cost of trading and boosting the competitive advantage of the economy in

attracting foreign direct investment. Measures undertaken under this process include the following:

- Establishment of the Zimbabwe Investment and Development Authority (ZIDA): A One-Stop-Investment Services Centre.
- Promulgation of a Special Economic Zones (SEZ) law which designates areas to be SEZs, and define the sectors of investment in these areas. The law also provides a number of fiscal and non-fiscal incentives.

Other measures have included the robust fight against corruption, the provision of investment security, and the promulgation of other investor friendly legislations.

**Chairperson, ladies and gentlemen,**

Zimbabwe continues to put in place legislation and incentives to encourage beneficiation and value addition, to

strengthen the country's productive capacities.

While creating jobs, boosting the country's income and generally pushing the country towards achieving the SDGs, these processes have the added advantage of lessening the burden on our transport infrastructure as fewer bulk products will be exported, than is currently the case where bulky raw materials are transported across borders, straining the transport infrastructure and attracting high transport costs.

The deliberate efforts on beneficiation and value addition are targeting all key sectors including agriculture, mining and food processing, among others. We are convinced that enhancing productive capacities helps in triggering the growth of vertical and horizontally integrated industries - a strategy for attracting both local and foreign direct investment. In that regard, Zimbabwe welcomes the policy

briefs from OHRLLS and the UNCTAD, on enhancing productive capacities and transforming LLDC economies.

**Ladies and Gentleman,**

With the plight of LLDCs worsened by structural challenges, it is critical that our Group advocates for enhanced assistance to implement the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and the ASYCUDA initiative. Targeted efforts should be placed on ensuring that vulnerable countries can address the challenge of weak productive capacities that adversely impact vulnerable economies, which are currently battling the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We call on the international community, with the UN and its agencies at the centre, to mobilise adequate support to enable us to reach sustainable human development



through the following:

First, devising innovative approaches for economic diversification to build resilience in order to “build back better” with enhanced FDI and other investments.

Second, giving higher priority to productive capacities, diversification of our economies, increase value-addition to our exports and assist us in further integration into global and regional value chains. These initiatives should be accompanied by clear indicators to help formulate more realistic policies.

Third, support around infrastructure development and providing advisory services at the request of LLDCs to seek approaches to trade and development.

Fourth, building institutional and human capacity to meet

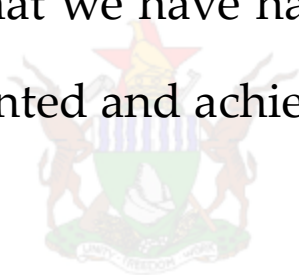
the changes demanded in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, especially focusing on skill-building for women and youth.

Fifth, ensuring that the changing digital landscape works equally for all by bridging the divide. To that end, we call for intensification of discussions in the WTO E-Commerce Work Programme to ensure that LLDCs build inclusive digital transformation ecosystems that enhance productive capacities and foster greater trade.

**Chairperson,**

As we come to the end of the VPoA, we call upon our partners to help us put in place a tracking mechanism that would assist in reviewing the progress that both ourselves, the LLDCs, and the development partners, have managed to achieve in the implementation of VPoA priorities.

I am confident that this meeting will be instrumental in articulating policy responses to trade and development issues of LLDCs for the upcoming 77<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly, and in the discussions on the successor to the VPoA during the Third UN Conference on LLDCs. The successor to the VPoA should benefit from hindsight and the experience that we have had, the lessons learned, for it to be action oriented and achievable.



**I thank you.**