GOVERNMENT OF ZIMBABWE

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF PUBLIC SERVICE, LABOUR AND SOCIAL WELFARE, PROF. P. MAVIMA AT THE 2023 HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM

JULY 2023
Excellences,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, let me begin by expressing Zimbabwe’s appreciation to the President of ECOSOC for convening this Forum, which comes at a time when the global economy is facing a myriad of challenges, all of which weigh heavily on sustainable development.

The theme of the Forum, is therefore, apt, as we work to find ways to rebuild from the COVID-19 pandemic. Our discussions during this Forum, a precursor to the crucial SDG Summit in September, should build momentum towards that crucial event, and together with other important milestones during the UNGA78 high-level week, propel us towards the achievement of sustainable development agenda.

Distinguished Delegates, the five (5) SDGs under review this year are paramount to the achievement of global sustainable development at all levels, highlighting the three key words: **acceleration, recovery** and **implementation**.
Zimbabwe, like many developing countries, has not been spared by the devastating effects of these global challenges, which further hinder the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

In this context, Zimbabwe is working tirelessly towards the successful implementation of all the 17 SDGs. Zimbabwe is pursuing its development path through the National Development Strategy 1 (2021-2025), in line with the National Vision 2030, of an upper-middle income economy by the year 2030. Our economic blueprint is fully aligned to and mainstreams the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.

We have registered notable progress through the promotion of high agricultural production and productivity through various strategies such as adopting climate smart agricultural innovations like the Pfumvudza/Intwasa (climate proofing agriculture). Furthermore, improved performance of the mining sector, and increased remittances channelled through official platforms, have contributed to the progress being registered in several Goals such as SDGs 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 9 and 13, through increased output; improved incomes; participation of women, youth and other marginalised groups; and increased throughput to mining.
and agro-processing industries. Zimbabwe is also prioritizing Rural Industrialisation; Innovation and Technical Skills Development and Workspace and Infrastructure support. We are, at the same time, emphasising the importance of reliable, accurate, disaggregated data, to be able to accurately determine how far we have come, and how much further we have to go.

In line with our mantra, “Zimbabwe is open for business”, we continue to use both domestic and external resources to finance development projects and programmes. Further, efforts by Government towards improving the ease of doing business, continue to be implemented in order to accelerate the recovery from COVID-19, and encourage local and foreign direct investments.

The unilateral sanctions on my country, by some Western countries, have, continued to wreak havoc on the lives and livelihoods of the people of Zimbabwe. Through our engagement, re-engagement and reaffirmation policy, we will continue to build goodwill and increase understanding with our international partners. It is in that spirit that we would want to reiterate that Zimbabwe is an Enemy to None and a Friend to all.

**Excellencies,**
Zimbabwe is heartened by the Secretary-General's call for collective action to reverse the self-destructing trend on the SDGs. We endorse his important call for restructuring the global financial architecture and the proposal on the SDG Stimulus, to provide the essential financial resources and support required by the developing countries to recover from lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, revive their prospects of realizing the SDGs and respond to the challenge of climate change.

Now is the time to walk the talk, to assist developing countries who are: drowning in debt, with no fiscal space or access to financial resources to invest in recovery; facing rising food and energy prices; and a widening technological gap that impact the access to quality education, sustainable health systems and the fight against climate change. Today, more than ever, it is imperative to achieve consensus on those issues that affect us as individual countries and as the international community. Only down that path will we be able to come closer to the satisfaction of the aspirations of those historically neglected peoples and those most at risk of being left behind.

In conclusion, allow me to reiterate that ahead of the SDG Summit, let us all come together with firm commitments to
ensure that no one is left behind, and that the needs and aspirations of the most vulnerable are at the center of our efforts. Therefore, in the spirit of multilateralism we can achieve this together leaving no one and no place behind.

I thank you.