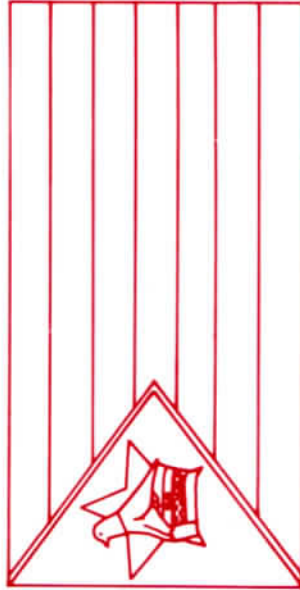




PRIME MINISTER THE HON ROBERT MUGABE

formerly a teacher, Robert Mugabe entered politics in 1960 and was for many years in the forefront of the black nationalist struggle against the white dominated government of the country. Between 1976 and 1980 he was Joint leader of the Patriotic Front and in April 1980 was elected Prime Minister of Zimbabwe



FLAG

Seven horizontal stripes of green, gold, red, black, red, gold and green with a white triangle bearing a red five pointed star on which a gold "Zimbabwe bird" is superimposed at the hoist

#### FOR FURTHER FACTUAL INFORMATION

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London W8 6NQ  
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Commonwealth Institute, Scotland  
8 Rutland Square  
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#### OTHER INFORMATION SOURCES

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429 Strand  
London WC2R 0SA  
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Telex: 262115

Zimbabwe Tourist Office  
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Source of Statistics (population, GNP, GNP per capita): World Bank Atlas 1987

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Commonwealth Information Centre  
Commonwealth Institute, London

# ZIMBABWE



Commonwealth  
Information Leaflet No. 11

## ZIMBABWE

The Republic of Zimbabwe is situated in southern Africa with Mozambique to the east, Zambia to the north and north-west, Botswana to the south-west and South Africa to the south. It lies astride the high plateau between the Limpopo River in the south and the Zambezi River in the north

## AREA

390,245 sq km. This is approximately three times the size of England

## POPULATION

8,406,000 (1985 estimate)

Most of the population is African (mainly the Shona and the Ndebele). There are also significant European and Asian communities, although there has been a decrease in these groups since the 1970's

## CLIMATE

Although basically tropical, there are many local variations caused by altitude. The low-lying valleys are hotter and more humid. The winters are mild

## STATUS

Republic and Member Nation of the Commonwealth

## DATE OF INDEPENDENCE

18 April 1980.

Formerly Southern Rhodesia, it was part of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, dissolved in 1963. In 1965, the Rhodesian Front (a coalition of white organisations committed to racial segregation) led by Prime Minister Ian Smith, made a Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI). This was not formally recognised by any

other country. There followed fourteen years of resistance from the black nationalists, spearheaded by the Patriotic Front. In 1979 the Zimbabwe/Rhodesia Parliament renounced independence and subsequent elections gave a decisive victory to Robert Mugabe's party. Under his leadership, Zimbabwe became legally independent

## HEAD OF STATE

HE The Rev Canaan Sodina Banana (President)

## HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

The Hon Robert Mugabe (Prime Minister)

## MAIN TOWNS

Harare (formerly Salisbury - capital), Bulawayo, Chitungwiza, Gweru (formerly Gwelo), Mutare (formerly Umtali), Kwekwe (formerly Que Que), Kadoma (formerly Gatooma)

## MAIN RIVERS AND LAKES

The Zambezi, Limpopo and Sabi/Lundi are the principal rivers. The Zambezi forms a natural border with Zambia. At Kariba the river is dammed to form Lake Kariba, one of the largest man-made lakes in the world. Another spectacular feature of the Zambezi is the famous Victoria Falls

## MAIN RELIGIONS

It is estimated that about half the black Zimbabwean population are Christian. The remainder follow traditional African religions

## MAIN LANGUAGES

Shona and Ndebele are the main Zimbabwean languages. English, the official language of government, commerce and industry is widely spoken

## AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

The main crops are sugar cane, maize, ground-nuts, wheat, millet, cotton, sorghum, tobacco, soya beans, bananas, and coffee. The timber industry is based on natural forests of teak and other indigenous hardwoods and upon large scale plantations of pine, eucalyptus and wattle

## LIVESTOCK

Cattle, sheep, pigs, goats and poultry are extensively reared and meat products are a major export

## INDUSTRIES AND MANUFACTURES

Metal industries, clothing and footwear, electricity generation and distribution, mining and quarrying, food products, textiles and chemicals are the most important industries. Tourism is reviving after a temporary decline. The national wildlife parks are an attractive feature of the country

## MINERAL S

Zimbabwe is particularly rich in mineral resources. These include gold (a major export), asbestos, chromium ore, coal, cobalt, copper, iron ore, nickel, silver and tin

## CURRENCY

Zimbabwe dollar (Z\$) (100 cents = 1Z\$)  
Exchange rate 2 March 1987  
Z\$ 2.5320 = £1 sterling

## GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT

US\$ 5,450 millions (1985 estimate)

## GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT PER CAPITA

US\$ 650 (1985 estimate)