

POLICY STATEMENT No. 15

The President's Speech at the
opening of the First Session of
the Second Parliament of
Zimbabwe

JULY 23, 1985

ZIMBABWE

(14)
Pawel Latal =

Mr. President and Members of the Senate, Mr. Speaker and Members of the House of Assembly, I welcome you to the First Session of the Second Parliament of Zimbabwe.

This is indeed a happy and historic day for all our people as we gather here to witness and participate in the opening of the First Session of the Second Parliament of Zimbabwe.

Three weeks ago our people, for the second time within six years, exercised their sacred, democratic right to elect a Government of their choice. I congratulate all of you who have been elected as members of our Second Parliament. I especially congratulate the Prime Minister and his new Government which, with renewed vigour, is poised to tackle the urgent problems we face in this Year of National Consolidation and beyond.

Our nation is young, but it is rich in experience: the experience of heroically waging a victorious war of national liberation, of successfully undertaking tasks of post-war rehabilitation and reconstruction and firmly laying the foundation for the building of a new, just and democratic society in Zimbabwe.

As we enter the second half of our first decade as an independent, sovereign state, we face many new challenges. These challenges, including those relating to the transformation of our socio-economic environment, the accelerated development of productive forces and the all-round improvement of the lot of the mass of our people, will not find us wanting in energy, dedication and commitment. With its mandate renewed and with the massive support that our people have so amply demonstrated recently, my Government is ready to go to work on the tasks that lie ahead.

In relation to defence, the Army will continue to upgrade its capability in training at all levels in all phases of warfare, as part of the overall plan to create a balanced, highly skilled force aimed at providing a potent deterrent against any hostile elements and in defence of our sovereignty.

We will continue to honour the external commitment, as agreed with our neighbour and ally, Mozambique, to safeguard the pipeline from Beira to Mutare and corresponding road and rail routes which are vital to our export and import trade. Internally, more vigorous operations will be mounted to eliminate dissident activity altogether.

My Government will intensify its level of contact and co-operation with all nations which seek to develop mutually beneficial relationships based on respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity and the principle of non-interference in the affairs of other states.

Within our own Southern African region, my Government's activities will be directed towards even closer collaboration with our fellow Front Line States in the search for a solution to the pressing problem of Namibian independence. Elsewhere we will continue our opposition to foreign intervention in the internal affairs of other states. We will make our stand on this issue very clear and will lend our support to efforts aimed at resolving outstanding questions peacefully. Similarly, my Government will continue to support all efforts aimed at ending the senseless arms race between superpowers.

Our vision for the future includes the establishment of a new international economic order, one that will allow for more efficacious monetary and trade relations, more equitable distribution of the world's wealth and one that will foster a more balanced, more logical relationship between the industrialized North and the developing South.

Several Bills will be introduced that will affect the character of our private and public law. These include a Succession Bill, a Contributory Negligence Reform Bill, a Prescribed Rate of Interest Bill and an amendment to the Legal Practitioners Act.

A new parliament building is being designed. This will provide better facilities than are available at present.

My Government realises the importance of using the three languages in debating; hence the introduction of simultaneous interpretation in the House of Assembly from either Shona or Ndebele into English or vice versa. Such a way of accommodating all Members will be put into practice following the success of the translation of parliamentary debates from English into Shona and Ndebele.

My Government, in its determination to curb fatal road accidents which claim innocent lives every year and which have now reached alarming proportions will expand the Police Traffic Branch, which will be fully equipped in order to enable the Zimbabwe Republic Police to tackle the problem of road traffic rules violations effectively.

It is the intention of my Government to amend the National Archives Act and the Printed Publications Act in the new session. The former will enable the National Archives to pursue a more vigorous records management programme, and the latter will widen the legal deposit requirements and provide for the deposit and preservation of non-book materials such as films, video tapes and sound recordings.

Following the promulgation of the Zimbabwe Development Corporation Act, the Corporation will become operational this financial year.

Zimbabwe continues to participate actively in international financial organizations and I am pleased to note that our country will have the honour to host the twenty-second annual meeting of the African Development Bank and the African Development Fund in May, 1986.

In the sphere of international trade my Government will continue to support our exporters by providing financial incentives that are within the nation's capability and consistent with our international obligations as a member of GATT.

My Government will continue to welcome foreign investment and looks forward to a positive response from both domestic and international business communities. We will, however, as before, give priority to investment intended for sectors or industries which Government considers to be strategic. For its part, my Government is making serious efforts to increase the proportion of budget resources allocated to the productive sectors as a strategy for promoting economic growth.

In an effort to improve financial administration and efficient management of our scarce resources, my Government is studying the possibility of restructuring accounting functions with a view to establishing a centralized cadre of professionally qualified officers to operate the accounting systems throughout Government. In addition, the existing legislation for the control of public moneys and state property is under review and revised legislation will be submitted for your approval which will take account of changing circumstances and incorporate the latest thinking on "value for money" audits.

Government is developing a planning infrastructure which is intended to facilitate a democratic planning process from village through Central Government. During the coming year, therefore, Government will concentrate on the refinement of the various organs that constitute the planning infrastructure.

The formation of the Five Year Plan is currently under way. The framework of the Plan is now before Government and the detailed work involved in the elaboration of the Plan will continue until the end of the year.

My Government will set up a Management Information System within the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development to facilitate the implementation and monitoring of all donor aided programmes and projects. The system should

assist in identifying bottlenecks during the implementation cycle of a programme or project to enable Government to take corrective measures at an early stage.

My Government will formulate an industrial development strategy to guide industrial transformation in future.

Efforts are under way to turn the Zimbabwe Iron and Steel Corporation into a parastatal and to streamline and integrate all state-owned iron and steel enterprises under the Corporation. Plans are at hand for the Corporation to develop diversified downstream industries based on iron and steel. Similarly, the Industrial Development Corporation will further be streamlined to improve its effectiveness as Government's implementation arm on participation in the manufacturing sector.

My Government will continue to encourage the decentralization of industry into rural areas and other less developed parts of the country to create employment and improve the standard of living of our people.

Sections of existing mining legislation will be amended to facilitate effective implementation of Government policy objectives to ensure increased level of local participation and to maximize exploitation of our mineral resources.

My Government notes with satisfaction the efforts that have been exerted by the industry to re-open the Eiffel Flats Nickel Refinery and to establish the University School of Mining Engineering and Metallurgy. The latter should in time complement the in-service training currently provided in the industry and at the Bulawayo School of Mines for Mine Managers, Mine Surveyors, Cartographers and other technicians.

Our participation in and contribution to, the activities of international trade organizations, has been widely acknowledged as being consistent and highly constructive throughout. My Government will prepare for the effective implementation of the Third Lome Convention to enable the country to derive maximum benefit from the Convention.

In its efforts to ensure that prices are reasonable to both the consumer and the trader, my Government will, in addition to providing advice on pricing matters, devote attention to the streamlining of price control regulations and to achieving co-ordinated action on pricing in order to ensure the expeditious processing of price change applications.

Great emphasis will be placed on developing strong workers committees and works councils, and consolidating the National

Labour Centre, as prerequisites to the establishment of industrial democracy and peace in our industries.

During this session a Social Welfare Assistance Bill designed to co-ordinate state assistance to destitutes will be introduced. Plans are also under way to establish a more comprehensive National Security Scheme that will provide financial benefits during old age, temporary or permanent disablement.

Expansion and consolidation of the country's vocational and technical infrastructure will be intensified during the current session. In particular, the National Vocational Training Centre will be developed and will direct and co-ordinate all national manpower training programmes covering Vocational Training Schools and Vocational Training Centres and private sector manpower training institutions.

My Government's training network of national, provincial and district training centres is continually being expanded to improve the performance of the service. An immediate priority is the construction in Bulawayo of a national training centre for middle to lower level civil servants similar to the centre at Highlands which is unable to meet the demand for training at those levels. In addition, construction of Provincial Training Centres at Chinhoyi and Bindura and the upgrading of the District Training Centre at Murewa will be undertaken as a matter of priority.

In the area of employment services, my Government will formulate and implement a more comprehensive national employment policy designed to create employment opportunities for all categories of job-seekers.

My Government will continue its commitment to the provision of education for all. Whilst we have succeeded in getting the majority of the school age population into school, greater efforts will be made to improve the overall quality of education. Local authorities and commercial farmers will be encouraged to improve the quality of school buildings, furniture and equipment in the schools in their respective areas.

In support of the envisaged qualitative improvements in education a one-year in-service programme will be mounted to upgrade primary trained teachers who are currently teaching in secondary schools, in the hope of improving teacher effectiveness.

Curriculum development work which began soon after independence is to be consolidated and extended. Thus, the distribution of locally based materials and aids for both teachers

and pupils to assist the learning process in circumstances where trained teachers and facilities are inadequate will be intensified.

Since it is imperative that all teachers in Zimbabwe enjoy equitable conditions of service, a decision has finally been taken, in close consultation with the Zimbabwe Teachers' Association, to establish a single teaching service. Legislation to achieve this objective will be introduced in this session.

In line with its policy of bringing health to the masses, my Government will build more Rural Health Centres and greatly improve and expand other health delivery facilities and services to assure the provision of adequate health care for all.

My Government will introduce revisions in existing health legislation, including tightening-up of the Food and Food Standards Act, and a reform of the Drugs and Allied Substances Control Act. The latter will include more stringent controls over the quality of drugs and also over their manufacturing and dispensing. A Medical Care Facilities Bill will also be introduced in the current session.

My Government's resettlement programme, which had been slowed down during the past three years of drought, will be greatly accelerated. It is envisaged that a minimum of 15 000 families will be resettled during the coming year

Small-scale irrigation development in commercial and resettlement areas will be stepped up through the utilization of resources from the Public Sector Investment Programme and the newly established National Irrigation Fund. Rehabilitation work will continue on existing irrigation schemes while several new schemes will be developed.

In the very important area of co-operative development the major thrust will be in the fields of training and extension. The provision of technical services in the areas of training, business consulting, audit and inspection and planning will be improved. The mass member education campaign intended to reach 40 000 co-operative members will be launched this July.

In the field of state farming the Agricultural and Rural Development Authority's operations will continue to expand. In conjunction with the Regional Water Authority, the Agricultural and Rural Development Authority will start development of a further 960 hectares at Middle Sabi as well as exploring possibilities of ground water supplies for the Chisumbanje scheme. Major irrigation development studies are to be carried out on the Dande River and the Zambezi Valley areas covering about 5 000 hectares and at Groot Vlei in the Limpopo Valley for rice production.

Of late, tsetse-fly has reinfested several areas in the North-East which would lead to serious stock losses. No effort is, therefore, being spared in ridding our country of this pest permanently. Already 8 000 square kilometres have been covered by ground spray and 2 000 square kilometres by aerial sprays. Further negotiations with the European Economic Community have been concluded which have resulted in European Economic Community finance being made available for spraying operations to eliminate tsetse from the whole region.

My Government will strive to improve marketing arrangements in the communal lands.

On the farming side, a major effort will be made to achieve high yields without causing erosion. It is our objective to achieve at least subsistence yields in the drier regions through a two pronged strategy, namely, switching to drought tolerant crops and using moisture conservation tillage techniques. To conserve such land, cattle grazing management schemes which do not lead to erosion are being vigorously implemented. A combined approach involving both arable and grazing areas—the Intergrated Land Use Plan—is soon to be launched.

My Government is committed to the rural electrification programme and thus to the provision of an alternate source of energy to the majority of our people. To this end and to arrest the destruction of our dwindling woodfuel resources, extension of the national grid to growth points and service centres, which is already under way, will be accelerated.

The extension of electrical supplies to rural domestic users is also being planned. In this regard completion of the Rural Electrification Master Plan will enable my Government to undertake this task on a national scale with emphasis on areas of limited woodfuel resources.

An Energy Centre will be set up to enhance research in the utilization of new renewable sources of energy; a National Training Centre for the power sector will be constructed to alleviate technical manpower shortages, and additional fuel storage facilities will be set up to increase the country's fuel storage capacity.

During this session of Parliament, a Bill will be introduced providing for the establishment of a statutory corporation to be known as the National Oil Corporation of Zimbabwe which will take over the functions of the National Oil Company of Zimbabwe.

My Government will continue to undertake major conservation works required to supply water to the communal lands, growth points and major urban and industrial centres of the country.

My Government continues in its endeavour to conserve our vital natural resources for the good of all our people, now and in the future. To this end conservation staff are being decentralized to grassroots level to ensure that conservation awareness is brought to all our people and that conservation committees are properly organized and managed.

It is the intention of my Government to amend the Parks and Wild Life Act in order to give Government wider powers in the protection of endangered plants and animals in this country.

To ensure self-sufficiency in timber and wood products in their various forms, Government will continue with the afforestation programme, providing seedlings and other forms of support in the communal land areas, and research will be undertaken into multi-purpose tree species suitable for these areas. The Forest Industries Training Centre in Zimbabwe to service the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) region has been established.

It is the intention of my Government through the Zimbabwe Tourist Development Corporation to develop the tourist infrastructure throughout the country. In addition, my Government, through the Corporation, and with the co-operation of the private sector, will launch an aggressive marketing campaign both internally and externally to promote Zimbabwe as an attractive, safe, and value-for-money holiday destination.

In the transport sector my Government will soon formulate a comprehensive national policy based on the recommendations of the National Transport Study.

Continued attention will be given to the urgent repair, improvement and expansion of the national road network to cater for increased agricultural and mining activity and to increase the number of district service centres served by bituminous roads. With over half of our surfaced state road network now over 20 years old, a greater amount of road development funding will be taken up in rehabilitating and strengthening this network between the larger centres.

My Government will undertake major improvements of all sectors of our civil aviation industry, including the upgrading of such airports as those at Hwange, Kariba and Masvingo, during the next five years.

My Government will continue to generate funds for an expanded urban housing programme. In order to increase the quantity and quality of rural housing, my Government has initiated the rural housing programme whose main objectives is the provision of decent, affordable and durable accommodation

for the rural people. My Government will ensure that our building and materials production brigades, building co-operatives, those engaged in aided self-help housing construction and the private sector play their full part in the provision of housing at all levels.

Building societies will be required to increase their loan facilities to low income earners and a building research unit will be established to look at more efficient cost effective technologies and designs. Plans are under way for the establishment of a National Housing Corporation.

My Government will establish rural newspapers, expand our mobile cinema fleet and establish information and communication centres for in-depth education of our people. The Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation will expand its rural transmitter network at a cost of \$3 807 000. Radio transmitters will be installed at Beitbridge, Kariba and Gokwe; and television transmitters at Zvishavane, Victoria Falls, Hwange, Kariba, Rutenga, Karoi and Mount Darwin.

Further progress will be made towards completion of the \$200 million post-independence development programme in Posts and Telecommunications. With the recent commissioning of the Mazowe Earth Satellite Station and the Gweru International Telephone Switching Centre, we have now achieved independent telecommunications links with the outside world.

Developments in our internal network in the near future will include installation of some 36 000 lines of automatic exchange equipment in urban areas, conversion of more of the remaining old manual exchanges in rural areas to automatic exchanges, and commissioning of radio-telephone systems at Gokwe, Mount Darwin, Centenary, Guruve, Mutoko and Murewa.

In the field of local government a Bill will be presented to amalgamate the present district and rural councils into one unit for each administrative district. The Urban Councils Act will also be amended to give my Government the opportunity of rationalizing the salaries, wages and conditions of service of local authority employees, so that they are in line with those in the Public Service and parastatals.

The Civil Defence Act will be repealed and replaced by a Civil Protection Bill whose main objective will be to establish a National Civil Defence Fund from which assistance for disaster victims may be drawn, and to make it mandatory for all local authorities to establish civil protection organizations.

My Government will continue to educate women on their rights, review women's situation in all spheres of development

and recommend the necessary remedial measures through the relevant ministries.

Both men and women will continue to be trained in various developmental skills at the recently opened National Training Centre in Bromley. This will have the effect of making communities more self-sufficient through the establishment of cottage industries. More community development workers will also be trained for their roles in these new developmental structures.

A National Handicraft Centre will be established for the training of women in specialized handicraft production. The Centre will also act as a centralized collection depot for handicrafts for the internal and external markets.

A pilot village development centre will be constructed in Chinhoyi. This will be the first of 6 000 expected in future and will provide the necessary supportive infrastructure to facilitate the participation of villagers in development.

The Pre-School Department, in order to standardize pre-school activities, will develop an early childhood curriculum and training syllabus for use by pre-school centres and supervisors respectively. Further, my Government will upgrade the infrastructure of many of the 3 000 established rural pre-school facilities.

My Government's youth skills training programme will be expanded and will this year include the building of Mashayamombe Training Centre in Mashonaland West Province and the expansion of Mushagashe Training Centre near Masvingo to upgrade both centres so that they can enrol 250 trainees each after completion.

In addition, skills such as motor mechanics, will be introduced at a number of the existing training centres to provide youths with varied skills to enable them to play a more active role in national development.

The National Sports Stadium, the construction of which was started in October 1984, is expected to be completed in 1987. The Stadium will provide a venue for major sporting events such as the All Africa Games and the Commonwealth Games. It will also provide our athletes with ideal facilities to train for these and other major competitions.

The budget and estimates of expenditure for the fiscal year 1985/86 and associated legislation will be presented to you for your approval.

In commending these matters to your consideration, I pray that the blessing of Almighty God may rest on your deliberations. I now declare this, the First Session of the Second Parliament of Zimbabwe, to be duly opened.