

POLICY STATEMENT No. 10

**The President's speech
on the third
anniversary
of Independence**

APRIL 18, 1983

ZIMBABWE

*Published by the Ministry of Information, Posts and Telecommunications,
P.O. Box 8232, Causeway, Zimbabwe.*

APRIL, 1983

*Produced by Publications Section
Zimbabwe Department of Information*

Printed by the Government Printer, Harare.

It is my privilege and very great honour, comrades, to address you today, as our nation prepares to cross over the threshold into its fourth year of sovereign statehood and freedom and as, together, we brace ourselves for what threatens to be a most demanding and challenging year for us all.

It will probably be the most difficult period we Zimbabweans have yet had to face since the birth of our nation just three years ago.

It will certainly require, from each and every one of us, the same courage, tenacity, strength of character and determination, so magnificently developed during the long years of our liberation struggle, if we are to successfully defend our hard-won freedom and maintain our course towards prosperity and progress for all.

But, fellow comrades, in addition to courage, tenacity and determination, our future, and that of our succeeding generations, depends on all of us channelling our energies, and resources into one common direction. Without this unity of purpose, and this togetherness, there can be no real progress, for we will remain weak and vulnerable—not only to external enemies, but also to those who would seek to destroy us from within.

As a unified nation, with an over-riding oneness of purpose to guide and protect us, there is no challenge, no obstacle and no enemy too big that we cannot face and overcome.

The past three years, when taken as a whole, have proved that Zimbabweans are more than adequately equipped to meet the challenges a new nation such as ours has to face. I have been filled with pride and overjoyed to watch over and witness the determination of Zimbabweans—so recently divided by a better and bloody conflict—to distance themselves from that past and to create a solid multiracial and non-racial base upon which future generations of Zimbabweans will be able to build a sound and viable nation.

It has been more than gratifying to all of us to experience the slow but definite reaching out by the majority of Zimbabweans to their fellow Zimbabweans—the grasping of hands in friendship and the squaring of

shoulders as our people turn to face the future, standing side by side, linked by a genuine desire for peace, partnership and progress.

Sadly, comrades, this wonderful healing spirit of friendship and reconciliation is not shared by all. Over the past year, we have seen the spread within our young nation of a cancerous virus. I am referring to the dissidence menace, the existence of which poses an intolerable threat to our continued peace and national security.

Comrades, your Government was faced with a situation in which it either had to surrender power in certain parts of the country to a band of criminal gangsters, or it had to act to re-assert the authority vested in it by the overwhelming majority of our people in the February 1980 elections.

Government chose to act and did so in a decisive manner. It was a clear warning to dissident elements and those who are behind them that they will not win and that further opposition of that cowardly, murderous nature cannot and will not be tolerated.

The dissidents are bent on causing misery and division, and in so doing, are playing right into the hands of our enemies—particularly the racist Pretoria regime, which is always prepared to exploit any internal unrest in any of the Frontline States in order to further its own policies of destabilization and subversion.

There is no doubt that the young men involved in these despicable acts of banditry have been misled by self-seeking politicians into believing that they can change the situation and overthrow the popularly elected Government by force of arms—what an expensive illusion, the biggest joke in living memory.

Who in his proper senses would choose to fight against freedom and lead a life of misery and self-inflicted oppression? Who in his proper senses would choose to live an outlaw for the rest of his life?

It is my hope that all our people will continue to co-operate with the forces of law and order, until all forms of banditry and lawlessness are completely eliminated from every corner of Zimbabwe.

Notwithstanding the isolated incidents of banditry, Zimbabwe remains one of the most peaceful, stable and progressive countries among developing nations. This one particularly sad and troublesome area should not be allowed to mar or overshadow the very real and impressive progress your Government has made towards the achievement of its objectives, as a whole, over the past twelve months.

It is not too late for the dissidents to abandon their forlorn cause at the hands of unscrupulous politicians who are unashamedly willing agents of foreign powers.

It is most unfortunate, indeed a tragic irony, that these misguided people are now bent on destroying the very freedom and independence they and their colleagues fought to bring about. Those of their colleagues who fell on the battlefield for the noble cause of nationhood must turn with pain and anguish in their graves at this disgraceful somersault.

Government, on the other hand, is equally determined to strive for unity and national prosperity. The only way forward is through such unity. The overwhelming majority of Zimbabweans want unity, the only sure guarantee for lasting peace and security. Those who stand in the way of unity are resisting the popular will of the masses.

Unity, however, will not be brought about by empty phrases; it can only be achieved through decisive action. National unity is greater than individuals—self-seeking individuals have no constructive role to play in the development of our country. Zimbabwe needs selfless men and women who are prepared to put the interest of their country before personal glory and self-aggrandizement.

To those who will have us torn apart by petty and parochial issues, may I remind them that Zimbabwe demands of us all a high sense of calling that requires us to rise above tribal and regional loyalties; our duty and responsibility to our nation should transcend all the venomous scourges of nepotism, tribalism, regionalism, ethnocentrism, and egocentrism.

It is incumbent on all Zimbabweans to respond to a higher and nobler call of national unity, with a single national identity. We are all one; we are all Zimbabweans, irrespective of where we may be born

or where we might work or reside; or the language we might speak. There is room for all in Zimbabwe to live in harmony and peace.

In spite of an exceedingly hostile Press campaign mounted by the Western media, our international standing and reputation have continued to grow as a result of Zimbabwe's increasing participation in international fora and as witnessed by our election to the United Nations Security Council, and the election of the Prime Minister, Cde Robert Mugabe, as one of the Vice-Chairmen of the recent New Delhi Non-Aligned Movement Summit.

Nearly 60 countries and international organizations are now accredited to Harare and we, in our turn, have established 21 diplomatic missions abroad over the past three years.

We continue to play our role, as a fully non-aligned nation, in the search for peaceful and just solutions whenever conflict between nations threatens the delicate peace and stability of our world, and we retain our position in the forefront of those developing nations earnestly seeking the establishment of a more just and equitable international economic order.

In our own region, we continue to play an active role within the Southern Africa Development Co-ordination Conference, and are making slow, but sure progress in our march away from dependence on the racist Pretoria regime.

We are pledged to combat all forms of racialism, colonialism and imperialism, wherever they may occur, and we are totally opposed to any and all forms of intervention and interference by one state in the internal affairs of another.

On the domestic front, enormous progress has been made in almost every field of Government's operations.

The acquisition of commercial land for redistribution to and resettlement of landless peasants continues to gain momentum. During the past twelve months, over one million hectares of land have been purchased and nearly 9 000 families have been successfully settled.

This brings the total area now reserved for resettlement to over two million hectares, and the total number of families settled since 1980, to over 21 000.

Over the past twelve months, 310 new co-operatives have been registered, marking yet further progress towards the socialist transformation of our economy through co-operative development.

As you will know, the harvesting of crops is now getting underway, but the prolonged drought has severely affected our agricultural production. In some areas, crops were completely wiped out and Government has had to act to provide emergency food aid to some of our people who would otherwise have certainly died from starvation.

I would like to take this opportunity to commend our farming community, both commercial and communal, for their untiring and courageous efforts to ensure adequate food production for our people, in spite of unfavourable climatic conditions and, in some parts of the country, in the face of a dangerous security situation.

The restoration of essential water supplies—particularly those supplies to irrigation schemes closed during the liberation war, has been a top priority for the Ministry of Water Resources and Development. Great emphasis has, of course, been placed on development within the rural areas, and in particular, on the provision of domestic water requirements to rural health centres, schools, army barracks and youth centres.

Local authorities throughout the nation are now beginning to adopt and implement Government's new national housing policy for both rural and urban areas. Building brigades are rapidly being formed and eight are already in effective operation. Another 15 are expected to become operational within the very near future.

Government's rural housing construction policy calls, of course, for the active co-operation and participation of the masses who will have to organize themselves and put up their houses on a self-help basis with the necessary technical and financial aid coming from Government in the form of loans.

In the field of health, Government has continued to make considerable progress in its thrust to improve rural health services. Emphasis has been placed on the improvement of preventive services and great strides have been taken in making health services available and accessible to as many Zimbabweans as possible.

My Government has also continued to make remarkable progress in the quantitative expansion of education so as to provide every Zimbabwean with the opportunity to be educated.

On the subject of youth—I am delighted to learn that well over 350 000 young Zimbabweans have now been mobilized into youth brigades and have demonstrated their high level of responsibility to society by voluntarily engaging in numerous projects in support of Government programmes throughout the nation.

In industry and other work-places, I am pleased to note that the majority of employers have now fully realized the advantage of having workers' committees at their places of work and that genuine and voluntary co-operation is now evident in many industries.

The racial imbalance of the past in the Public Service has been corrected and black Zimbabweans now hold a majority of senior Government positions.

Emphasis within the public Service will continue to be placed on the development of a sound infrastructure at all levels of Government, with constant in-service training taking place in a concerted effort to improve efficiency within our administration.

A strong administration infrastructure is absolutely crucial to our continued development and, in particular, to the efficient implementation of the projects and development called for under the three-year Transitional Development Plan.

In the field of communication, television transmissions are now in colour and there are plans to establish a second television channel to expand the transmission network to improve rural coverage.

One of the most crucial exercises being undertaken by the information and media services in the country is the drive to urge all those Zimbabweans eligible to vote, to register themselves as voters as soon as possible.

Government's efforts have resulted in the registration thus far of over 800 000 persons, but there is still an enormous amount of work to be reached by the end of this year. Your vote, is your voice and it is your patriotic duty to make that voice heard.

A sharp drop in world metal prices placed enormous pressures on the mining industry in Zimbabwe as a whole.

A number of smaller mines were forced to close, and it was only through intensive Government activity and intervention that all our larger mines—with the exception of the Empress Nickel Mine—are still in operation.

The difficulties of the past year have provided a unique opportunity for Government and the mining companies to work closely together to come to fully appreciate each other's points of view.

Indeed, the future of the industry looks very bright as both Government and the mining companies are now working together towards the same goals.

During the year under review, Government moved towards the achievement of its stated goal of state participation in, and control of, the mining industry. To this end, the Mineral Marketing Corporation of Zimbabwe was established and now acts as the sole agent for the sale and export of all minerals produced from Zimbabwe.

Similarly, the Zimbabwe Mining Development Corporation—soon to be established—will be the vehicle through which the state will participate in the mining investment and operations. Government also acquired a 40 per cent. controlling equity participation in the Wankie Colliery Company and has actively encouraged the setting up of mining co-operatives.

The world economic recession also had a marked negative effect on our industrial sector where productivity, generally, was low. The manufacturing sector, however, still offered good prospects for investment and over 100 new and expansion projects in various fields were approved.

Government's policy of participation in this sector was advanced by the acquisition of controlling interests in both CAPS Holdings and Olivine Industries.

As a nation, we experienced, in 1982, our worst fuel shortage since independence—a crisis arising from deliberate and calculated enemy action against our fuel storage and transport facilities.

I would like to commend you all for the mature and highly responsible manner in which you faced up to that particularly trying crisis.

In response to the severe pressures experienced as a result of the sharp appreciation of our dollar against the currencies of our major trading partners, Government decided to devalue the Zimbabwe dollar by 20 per cent. This bold move had the effect of restoring viability to our exporting sectors, preserving employment and generally assisting efforts to restore stability and balance to our external accounts.

Shortly before the devaluation, an export promotion scheme became operational and in conjunction with the devaluation, provided a stimulating incentive to manufacturers and producers to find export markets for their goods.

Preparations for the establishment of the Zimbabwe Development Bank are well advanced and work is also proceeding on a bill to establish the Zimbabwe Development Corporation in the not too distant future.

Zimbabwe's participation within multilateral financial institutions such as the African Development Bank, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), have facilitated the negotiation of a number of assistance packages from these institutions—the most notable being the recently announced IMF loan package of \$375 000 000 to help Zimbabwe bear the effects of the world recession.

There are encouraging signs, however, that this terrible economic recession is slowly receding, and although it will take some time for the effects of any such recovery to make themselves felt in Zimbabwe, the measures your Government has taken to protect and strengthen the economy, will place Zimbabwe in an excellent position to take full advantage of an eventual upturn in the world economic situation.

If I have listed all these achievements and advances, and if I have dwelt at length with these very positive aspects of the past twelve months, it is simply to demonstrate that in spite of a very serious international economic recession, in spite of the brutal policy of insidious destabilization being waged against our country by the racist Pretoria regime, and in spite of a determined attempt by certain misguided criminal elements within our own society to cause division and to shatter our hard-won peace, through acts of savage banditry and subversion, the people's Government has nevertheless succeeded in making truly remarkable progress in the consolidation of our independence.

Comrades, for as long as there are those who continue to pull against the popular flow, our potential for development and progress will be adversely affected. We cannot allow these divisions to continue. We must strive for unity—and as we celebrate this, the third anniversary of our independence, let us all rededicate ourselves to this one, crucially important goal.

Let us make unity and peace our common themes throughout the year ahead, and let us strive to achieve them on all levels.

Let us work for peace in all our dealings as individuals. Let us strive for unity and peace within our family groups, and within our various communities.

Above all, let us strive for peace and unity as a nation, within the family of nations, and face up to the exciting and challenging year to come, in the sure knowledge that our togetherness, our over-riding oneness of purpose, will surely see us through.

*Long live our hard-won independence.
Happy independence anniversary to you.
Thank you.*

