



ZIMBABWE

STATEMENT BY HONOURABLE PROFESSOR PAUL
MAVIMA (MP), MINISTER OF PUBLIC SERVICE, LABOUR
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ON THE OCCASION OF THE
60th SESSION OF THE COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT (CSocD 60)
7-16 FEBRUARY 2022: NEW YORK

Chair,

Let me start by congratulating you and the members of the bureau on your election to preside over the 60th Session of the Commission for Social Development under the Priority Theme *“inclusive and resilient recovery from covid-19 for sustainable livelihoods, well-being and dignity for all: Eradicating poverty and hunger in all its forms and dimensions to achieve agenda 2030”*

Chair:

The theme aptly reflects the overarching goals of the basic, global requirements for achieving Agenda 2030. Our success will depend on our unity of purpose in our efforts to end hunger and poverty in all their forms and manifestations.

In Zimbabwe, various inclusive social protection programmes are being implemented to reduce poverty and vulnerability in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. These interventions include sustainable livelihood programs; in-kind and cash transfers; food, health and education assistance; and child protection services, among others. It is important to note that all programming, deliberately mainstreams persons with disabilities, in support of their rights and realisation of their full potential.

Chair

The lockdown restrictions put in place to combat the spread of COVID-19 impacted on the livelihoods of many households, especially those working in the informal sector. Accordingly, the Government of Zimbabwe extended its existing unconditional cash transfer program, which ordinarily targets ultra-poor households which are labour

constrained, child headed and female headed households, to also cater for households that had been rendered transitory poor by the pandemic. Working with UNICEF, an Emergency Social Cash Transfer Programme was introduced.

Chair,

In order to move from social welfare to sustainable and resilient social development, deliberate efforts are being made to promote household resilience and self-reliance. This approach proved to be more sustainable, contributing to the social good and overall socioeconomic development of the country.

On this note, a number of initiatives with productive community works component are being implemented. These include projects such as horticulture; community gardens; crop production by small holder farmers under irrigation; construction of piped water schemes, installation of solar powered irrigation schemes and construction of classroom blocks; as well as digital skills marketing for youths, among other projects.

Chair,

Government also made a deliberate effort to expand the education assistance programme to cater for school fees, levies, uniforms, stationery and examination fees for vulnerable children in mainstream primary and secondary schools, as well as in special schools for children with disabilities.

Going into 2022, cash transfers will be extended to households with learners receiving education assistance to engage in income generating activities, whilst water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) components will be added, so as to improve the wellbeing of these families. The health assistance programme went beyond its targeted beneficiaries, to include everyone who had been rendered vulnerable.

Chair,

The provision of food relief to food insecure and ultra-poor households remained a priority to ensure that no one went hungry in the country. Accordingly, grain continues to be distributed in rural areas, whilst urban dwellers receive food vouchers and cash for cereal.

Chair

Investment in children remains key, as the country aspires to fulfil the provisions of SDG16 on ending all forms of violence against children. Government continues to provide care and protection services to needy children under the National Case Management System for the welfare and protection of children. In addition to this, various pieces of legislation and policies are being put in place to protect children, which include the National Alternative Care Policy for Children in Zimbabwe and the Children's Amendment Bill and the Child Justice Amendment Bill.

In the spirit of leaving no-one behind, Chair, support to persons with disabilities is being prioritized. The Government of Zimbabwe recently launched the National Disability Policy, which takes a twin track approach and provides for the mainstreaming of disability across all sectors, and the establishment of targeted disability projects. This is meant to ensure active economic participation and social inclusion of persons with disabilities in society.

In conclusion, Chair,

The COVID-19 pandemic, has no doubt increased vulnerabilities, thus creating a high demand for sustainable social protection services in an environment where resources are scarce. However, the Government of Zimbabwe continues to work together with its partners to deliver the much-needed services to the populace, with the aim of providing sustainable and empowering solutions that seek to ensure that households' wellbeing is guaranteed, as we journey towards achieving global Agenda 2030 and the AU Agenda 2063.

I thank you all for your kind attention.

Stay safe from the Covid-19 virus.