



ADDRESS

BY

**THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF
ZIMBABWE, HIS EXCELLENCY**

DR. E. D. MNANGAGWA

AT THE

**COVID-19 PANDEMIC RESPONSE: ENDING
THE PANDEMIC AND BUILDING BACK**

22 SEPTEMBER 2021

Your Excellency, Mr. Joe Biden, President of the United States of America and host;

Excellencies, Heads of State and Government;

Distinguished Delegates;

I commend you, Your Excellency, President Biden for this very important Summit and for extending an invitation to Zimbabwe to participate. As with others, my country has not been spared from the untold suffering brought about by the pandemic. However, many lessons have been learnt.

In March 2020, Zimbabwe recorded the first COVID 19 case marking the beginning of the pandemic in our jurisdiction. Faced with a frail health system brought about by a multiplicity of factors mainly induced by years of economic sanctions, my Government, in partnership with other stakeholders, is implementing the comprehensive COVID-19 National Preparedness and Response Strategic Plan, with remarkable successes.

These include the capacitation of health institutions health service personnel and front-line workers to adequately respond to the pandemic. The goal being to prevent, contain and mitigate the pandemic in line with the World Health Organization guidelines.

A timely and bold decision to set aside fiscal resources, against other demanding national needs, for the purchase of vaccines and other exigencies, paid off. Through a robust National Vaccination Programme my Government remains committed to provide free, safe and convenient vaccination. We are on course to achieve national herd immunity thereby playing our part towards ensuring a “vaccinated world”.

Internal capacities to produce Personal Protective Equipment, as well as my Government’s recent unveiling of an Oxygen Plant with capacity to produce medical oxygen for internal needs as well as for exports are contributing to my country’s quest to “Save Lives Now.”

Zimbabwe is undertaking an Intra-Action Review of the national response to document achievements, lessons learnt and challenges. Findings of this Review will inform our steps towards stronger global health architecture.

In the spirit of the mantra, “no one is safe until everyone is safe”, we appeal for greater access to vaccines by those in the Global South. Greater efforts must be made to end the hoarding and inequitable distribution of vaccines across the globe.

Zimbabwe stands ready to collaborate with all members of the comity of nations to end this pandemic and to build back better our health systems and economies, for the good of humanity.

I thank you.