

Understanding and Embracing the New Dispensation in Zimbabwe

Parliamentary Maiden Speech

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Mr. Speaker, Sir, Cabinet Ministers, Honorable members of Parliament I rise to make my maiden speech in this august house. We are at a stage in our country where we are building bridges. We are at that juncture where we have found each other. We have come together; we must stay together, work together and deliver on the promise of our revolution. This is national interest time. We have embarked on an irreversible process of inclusiveness with the clear understanding that the GPA of 15th September 2008 is

the only workable arrangement in our country. There is unprecedented unanimity among our citizens on this position. Mr. Speaker, Sir, this was clearly amplified by the vote in this august house for Constitutional Amendment no. 19, where 184 out of 184 members endorsed it, and the 72 out of 72 Senators did the same. As I present my views, let me emphasize that my intention is to build, and not to destroy; unify, and not disunite. However, I will seek to challenge us as Zimbabweans by speaking frankly on the matters we are facing. Is it not that they say a problem realized is half solved? Moreover this august house is the distinguished arena of both rational disputation and robust democratic dialogue. Consequently, I will be remiss in the discharge of my duties if I did not deliver a no-holds-barred maiden speech. There will be no prisoners taken today.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Government that I am part of, this inclusive institution, is a creature of abnormal circumstances. We are a product of the SADC dialogue process. But why did we have to negotiate? Honorable Members, lest we forget, we were forced to talk to each other in this manner because we had some problems with our elections, to put it politely. If we are to be candid and brazen about it, we have to accept that we had fraudulent elections on March 29th 2008. What is worse is that the run-off Presidential election on June 27th 2008 was a complete farce, a nullity.

Understanding this background allows us to clearly articulate the agenda of our inclusive government. The sum total of our mandate is to ensure that at the next elections Zimbabweans can vote freely and fairly. This means that creating conditions for free and fair polls is

the overarching duty and obligation of this inclusive government. The question is then how do you achieve this? This is done by carrying out radical political and economic reforms underpinned by five key activities; healing the nation, adopting a new constitution, resolving the humanitarian crisis, recovering and stabilizing the economy, and transforming our economy. Our people and country went through trauma and brutality in the June 27th 2008 elections. The national healing process must achieve a never again framework. Never again should Zimbabweans slaughter each other over political differences. Never again should Zimbabweans question each other's patriotism because of political affiliation. Most of the challenges that confront us as a nation are due to a dysfunctional, ineffective and undemocratic constitution. In adopting a new constitution, it is important that the process of developing it is as important as the final contents. Hence, this inclusive government seeks to facilitate the development of a truly people driven, democratic constitution, with total buy in, and ownership by the entirety of civic society, in particular the NCA, ZCTU, the student movement, the churches, the business community, and other political parties not involved in the GPA. By definition a constitution is a consensus document, and not a contested piece of paper produced by three political parties. In addition to the constitutional reforms, there must be other political reforms including the removal of AIPPA and POSA from our statutes and drastic media reforms. Our local media should be sufficiently empowered to report freely without bias. The international media, such as BBC and CNN must be immediately allowed back into the country. On

economic recovery and stabilization we are stepping in the right direction with STERP. Beyond recovery and stabilization we must seek to transform our economy through establishing a long term economic vision and strategy. Let us lay the foundation for this ambition during the tenure of this government.

Mr. Speaker Sir, there are three themes that we must grasp in order to deliver on the agenda that I have outlined. The first one is that; *“Change has come to Zimbabwe and we cannot behave as if it is business as usual.”* All of us, Zimbabweans and those external players interested in the matters of our nation, need a paradigm shift in the way we think, and operate. The days of a unitary government driven by one party are gone. We now have an inclusive government with three political parties in cabinet. There used to be, for all intents and purposes, one center of executive authority in our constitution, the Presidency. The Cabinet was essentially a compliant rubber stamp institution. In the new dispensation, executive authority now clearly resides in three locations; the Presidency, Premiership, and Cabinet. Masamba asiyana. There are only three things that the President can constitutionally do without consulting the other two centers of power, that is; declare war, declare martial law, and appoint his two deputies. On any other decisions there has to be discussions with the Premiership and Cabinet. Any behavior outside this framework is illegal, and will be challenged, institutionally, political and in the courts.

Honorable members, even your work here in Parliament has to change. You need a paradigm shift

as well. There are no longer any opposition benches, or ruling party ones. You can no longer operate on a partisan basis, as we are all now in one government together. So how are you going to do your work? When a Cabinet Minister brings a position or policy to parliament, it will be after the inclusive Cabinet has agreed by consensus. When Minister Biti or Minister Mumbengegwi comes to Parliament with issues they will be having the backing of the leadership of the three political parties. How are you going to respond? Obviously, you cannot do it as you used to do it, on partisan basis. You have to argue each issue on its merit. Honorable Members, now you have to put your thinking caps on all the time. Masamba asiyana.

The new dispensation also means we cannot continue with the destructive behavior of politicizing national institutions and activities. For example you cannot have the organ of one political party determine and declare national heroes. When you do so two things happen, you undervalue and cheapen the heroism of the recipient of the status; and more importantly you leave out other deserving heroes. The deaths of two distinguished Zimbabweans two weeks ago serve to illustrate this matter. No one in this august house doubts or questions the heroism of General Vitalis Musungwa Gava Zvinavashe. He was a soldier of soldiers, a commander of commanders. However, when you have him declared a hero by the ZANU-PF politburo, you devalue his heroism. You make him half a hero. On the other hand let us consider the death of Susan Nyaradzo Tsvangirai. If one considers her role in our nation, and the number of people who mourned her in the country, region, continent and the world,

she deserves to be accorded heroic status. Yet, she was not even considered for such recognition. This is a travesty of justice in our country. By any measure and judgment of heroism Mrs. Tsvangirai is a heroine of heroes, the mother of our struggle, and the mother of our nation. Going forward, we want Cabinet to develop a policy on the determination and declaration of national heroes, and set up a Cabinet Committee that will consider potential recipients of such honors.

With the inclusive government in place it is important that all behaviours associated with a unitary government be challenged in our public and private organizations; government institutions, media houses, educational institutions, local authorities, universities, and business entities. We need a paradigm shift and a new way of doing things across the breadth and length of our country. What informs and drives our polity must change. A new value system rooted in inclusiveness is imperative.

The second theme we have to embrace is that in whatever we do, *“Zimbabweans must take charge of their lives. We must be masters of our destiny.”* This should be the clarion call. As we develop our economic recovery plans, and address matters affecting our nation, we must be driven by the Kennedy-Gandhi doctrine. Mr Speaker, Sir, we must paraphrase Kennedy and say “Ask not what other nations can do to salvage Zimbabwe, but rather what we can do as citizens to drive our country.” The primary financing of STERP, our recovery plan must come from us through improving exports, increasing capacity utilization, economic growth, revenue generation, increased trade

and then collection of taxes and tariffs. Domestic investment, including Diaspora efforts, should lead and drive foreign direct investment. Yes we need humanitarian assistance, budget support, and balance of payment support; but these external inputs should only come in to buttress our own efforts. In any case, in the long run, it is investment driven economic development that will sustain our radical transformation into a globally competitive, prosperous and democratic nation. Only us working together as Zimbabweans can achieve this. Let us listen to Gandhi as he encourages us “to be the change we seek to see in Zimbabwe.”

Mr Speaker, Sir, this brings me to the thorny issue of sanctions. It is my considered view there are two types of sanctions. There are sanctions we impose on ourselves and those imposed on us by others. For the past 10 years Zimbabweans have been imposing sanctions on themselves through corruption, poor governance, incompetence, mismanagement, fraudulent elections, political violence, and the breakdown of the rule of law. Before we even begin to ask others to remove whatever measures they have imposed on us, we must remove these sanctions we have imposed on ourselves. Charity begins at home, Mr Speaker, Sir. If these destructive activities and transgressions we have been inflicting on ourselves, were all in the past, I could say we are making progress. No, No, No, it is getting worse!! As I am speaking right now, there are fresh farm invasions, abductions, illegal arrests, disregard of court orders, wanton violation of the rule of law, violence among our supporters, the language of hate and division, and

general disregard of the rule of law. To add insult to injury, there are unresolved outstanding issues in the implementation of the GPA. The matters involving provincial governors, permanent secretaries, ambassadors, and the appointments of the RBZ governor and the attorney general have not been resolved nearly two months after SADC communiqué of the 27th of January 2009, which consummated the GPA. This is disgraceful. All these nefarious activities mean that the current inclusive government is actually imposing new sanctions on the people of Zimbabwe. Let me make this very clear and unequivocal. I am the Deputy Prime of the State of Zimbabwe. My government is guilty as charged. We are behaving as an irresponsible and rogue regime. We must address these matters urgently. We have an obligation to build credibility of, and confidence in this inclusive government. If we do not, we will then not have any moral authority to ask any nation to remove any measures imposed on us. Even if the allegation that there are fresh farm invasions is false, the perception is very damaging. In any case, perception becomes reality. We must deal with whatever is leading to any such perceptions. Mr. Speaker Sir, if we do not address these current sanctions we are imposing on ourselves there will be no humanitarian assistance, budget support, revival of tourism, and investment coming our way. We will be doomed and this government will definitely collapse.

Having taken a clear position on what we need to do as Zimbabweans, I now turn to the second type of sanctions. We are saying to the international community we understand why you imposed sanctions

on us, and why you have not removed them. We understand your skepticism. However, we are also saying we are clear on the challenges we are facing and the transgressions that we are committing. We are determined to solve these matters. As they say a problem realized is half solved. We believe these challenges are not insurmountable, they are teething problems. We are determined to overcome them. We are working day and night. As we do this, please help us help ourselves. Here is our message to the US, the British, and the Europeans; you must remove all sanctions, any type of measures, call it what you may, that you have imposed on our country. You cannot adopt a wait and see attitude. You cannot give us conditions, such as signs of progress, inclusiveness and entrenchment of democracy and the rule of law. While these are also our targets, to achieve them we need financial resources and assistance. It is not possible for us to achieve these milestones while sanctions are in place. It becomes a chicken and an egg situation. I wish it was possible, to get half a chicken and half an egg. What all this means is that when the West gives conditions before reengagement, they are setting us up for failure. It will simply lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy. Let me emphasize that the continuation of sanctions on Zimbabwe is both illogical and irrational. By imposing or maintaining sanctions on the inclusive government it means you are applying those measures on Cde Tsvangirai, the Prime Minister of Zimbabwe, who among other things is in charge of supervising policy implementation. Even the so-called targeted measures do not make sense. For example, Chinamasa and Mumbengegwi are now a critical part of the PM's team, how do you apply

restrictions on them without undermining the PM. We must take note that, if the government fails because of lack of support, it is the people of Zimbabwe who are the biggest losers. More, importantly, it will not be Mugabe who would have failed. He has failed dismally many times, and he cannot fail any more than he has already done. It is Tsvangirai and his team, including all of us who came in from the opposition, who will be disgraced. Furthermore, a collapse of this government will drive this country into dire crisis that will make Somalia look like child play. Is this what you want, America, Britain and Europe? Whose interests are you serving?

It is in this context that we denounce in the strongest of terms the extension by one year of sanctions on Zimbabwe by President Barrack Obama. It is my view that this unfortunate decision was based on ignorance and arrogance. How can you say “The actions and policies of the government of Zimbabwe pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the US?” Is that even the correct way of phrasing your concerns? We all thought of paramount importance were the people of Zimbabwe and their aspirations, and not US foreign policy. Yes, we have challenges in implementing the GPA, but grant us the common sense and intelligence that we know what we want as a nation. There is unprecedented unanimity among our citizens that this government must succeed. Why is a US President with African roots making irresponsible decisions without consulting Zimbabweans, Africans and African institutions? We take particular exception to this unmitigated ignorance and arrogance.

Mr. Speaker Sir, there was one long term solution, the effective medicine, to both types of sanctions that I have discussed, in this house. This takes the form of rebranding our country. We need to work on the image of our nation and be known for different things. We must seek to be known for the following; effective unity and inclusiveness, political stability, a hardworking population, outstanding human capital, adherence to laws, observance of the rule of law, respect for property rights, business confidence, a safe destination for investment, high technology hub, a transportation and services hub, a broad industrial base, and a strong exploitable resource base. We must also make sure that our personal and corporate brands are aligned with the aspired national image. This country branding initiative is a twenty year journey that should start today. Once we embark on this national imaging task we will effectively shake away both types of sanctions.

The third and last theme I will discuss is the case for; *“Institutional creativity and innovation rooted in imaginative thought leadership.”* There is need to think outside the box. There is need to exercise our minds as if there is actually no box. We need to rethink our understanding of leadership, institutions, governance and their respective roles. We need to embrace transformational and servant leadership styles. Leadership is about making others leaders. It is about creating leaders, and not followers. Leaders should seek to serve, and not to be served. The ultimate test of leadership is whether you can effectively make yourself irrelevant, by empowering others. If you are a

CEO of a company for 20 years and you have not produced a number of CEOs you are not a leader. If you are a director on the board of 8-10 companies, and you have not produced or enabled others to become directors, you are not an effective director, and neither are you a leader. Mr. Speaker, Sir, if you are Speaker of this house for 20 years and you have not produced a single Speaker, you are not a Speaker! Honorable Chamisa, if you are a President of a country for 29 years and you have not produced a single President, you are not a leader. You are not even an effective manager.

We need also to appreciate and leverage the difference between performance based and learning organizations. This is the new institutional thinking that should guide our work. We must rethink the role of the state and the market. The primary role of government should be that of an enabler, a facilitator in the economy. We leave business to business, and let the market forces play their part. We must move away from command and control. We must allow the market to determine prices, salaries and exchange rates. The State must play its role using smart and effective regulations and not unimaginative and prohibitive controls. We must attract and facilitate private capital into aspects of the economy traditionally the purview of the State, such as infrastructure. Let us allow private sector investment into roads, water and power. This can be achieved through public-private partnership (PPP) or built operate transfer (BOT) models. For example, if we make pricing and tariffs competitive in the energy sector, draw up power purchase arrangements; a private investor can invest

in power generation, sell 40% to the national grid and export the balance 60%. Let us be creative and imaginative. We also need to engage the global climate change agenda, and embrace the notion of green jobs and green technology. In all our endeavors in the affairs of our nation, we must understand that it is not enough to have a vision, mission or strategy. It is not enough to have strategic correctness, policy correctness or directional correctness. The proof of the pudding is in the eating. We must spend time doing implementation planning. There is need for timelines, milestones, targets, ownership of work streams, incentives and penalties, measures and metrics of success, and a feedback mechanism. Mr. Speaker, Sir, thereafter the mantra is *execution, execution, execution*. In all we do, we need to reject the “it cannot be done syndrome.” We must become possibility thinkers, we must exercise possibility thinking. On this one, we are together with Obama, “Yes we can!!” should be the slogan.

In conclusion, Honorable members, Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is important that we understand the historic nature of what is expected of this particular Parliament. Let us premise our thinking by looking at Maslow hierarchy of needs. Maslow was a psychologist, who postulated that human beings at the basic needs level start by seeking food, shelter, and other essentials as they move up the hierarchy of needs. What is the highest stage in this framework, honorable members? Yes, he defined it as self-actualization. But I have news, and education for you honorable members, Mr Speaker, Sir. We have since officially disagreed with Maslow and improved on his work. There is a higher

stage, the ultimate aspiration, which we call self-*transcend, go beyond self, and leave a legacy.* I challenge this august house to go beyond self-interest, transcend partisan ambitions, and deliver a peaceful, democratic and prosperous Zimbabwe. Honorable members must become players, who are also winners in the agenda of accomplishing a globally competitive nation. This will be our cross-party generational result, our collective legacy.

Mr Speaker, Sir; Honorable Members, I thank you.