

**President Morgan Tsvangirai's speech at the
launch of the
2013 Harmonised Election Campaign**

Marondera, 7th July 2013

Vice President of the MDC Hon. Thokozani Khupe

Members of the Standing Committee

Our colleagues in the broader democratic movement

Members of Civic Society

Members of the national Council and national executive

Provincial, ward and branch members of the MDC

Cabinet Ministers here present

Members of the diplomatic corps

Ladies and Gentlemen

Today is a historic day in the MDC family and the democratic movement at large as we collectively embark on this last mile towards real change and the total transformation of our lives.

Today, we showcase that we are not only a party of excellence but also a party of substance as demonstrated by our policies.

We are showing, through our manifesto that we launch today as we officially commence our campaign, that indeed, we have a plan to govern this country.

We are faced with an election without reforms and against a leopard that has remained faithful to its spots, but our faith in God and our collective desire for real transformation will make us triumph over the setbacks, which are temporary. God does not wish the people of Zimbabwe to remain in a permanent state of suffering. Our faith and our unshakeable belief in liberty will drive us to usher in a new era for our country, even as we participate in these polls with a heavy

heart. Fellow Zimbabweans, let us put God first in everything that we do.

We have tried our best over the last four years, against serious resistance from our counterparts in Government, to ensure that this country is prepared for a genuine, free, fair and credible election. Regrettably, what we have witnessed in the last few weeks is a concerted effort designed to rob the election of legitimacy before it has even begun. But we believe in the people of Zimbabwe and your collective wisdom. We know you, the people of Zimbabwe, will do the right thing for yourselves, your children and the future of this country. Indeed, let us move forward in a New Zimbabwe!

We are also showing, through this mammoth crowd that I see here, that we have the people of Zimbabwe solidly behind us and behind our collective mission.

We can see the horizon and I share your optimism, that this time we will close a sad chapter of despair, violence, unilateralism, bullying and barbarism and open a new one of hope, peace, prosperity and happiness.

As the people of Zimbabwe, we have walked a long and tortuous journey but we can now clearly see our destination that is now within reach- a New Zimbabwe and a New Beginning.

1. Our record in government

Our four-year stint in the inclusive government has been adventurous as it has been life-changing for the people of Zimbabwe.

History will record that the MDC saved this country from the precipice.

It is easy in the current stability and in the middle of a breakfast with eggs and bread to forget that as recently as 2008, we were stampeding for wild fruits in Stone-Age competition with fellow human beings and wild animals. Life was harsh and brutal, the guiding principle being the primitive survival of the fittest. It is easy to forget that bread was being imported from South Africa and our shelves were empty, our hospitals without medicines and our schools without textbooks and teachers.

It now seems like so long ago when we had hordes of worthless currency and when we were all very poor billionaires!

Our positive contribution is a matter of public record.

When we came into government, we launched the Government Work Programme (GWP).

Thanks to the GWP, our hospitals are functioning again, we have tamed inflation, our supermarket shelves are full again and our major roads have been rehabilitated.

Through the Education Transition Fund and with the support of donors, we managed to print 13 million textbooks for our schools.

In short, we returned among the people a belief in a functioning and caring government when it was clear that our political cousins had run out of ideas.

The past is now another country. We in the MDC gave Zimbabweans time out and we have a perfect opportunity, in this election, to finish it off by completing the change that we began together four years ago. We could have been stubborn but because we care for the people, we agreed to work with our political opponents, knowing very well that it would not be an easy path dealing with an intransigent lot.

We therefore cherish our modest achievements gained in the face of serious resistance to reason and common sense and we hope the people recognise our efforts; that we have shown our promise of what we can do with exclusive authority to govern.

Internationally, we have brought the country out of isolation, even though our political counterparts seem hell-bent on driving Zimbabwe away from the family of nations. The level of arrogance is shocking. The people of Zimbabwe have a chance in this election to resist attempts at driving this country into miserable isolation.

We have a proud record and if we could afford all that positive change shackled with an insincere and dishonest partner, an MDC government can gallop this nation to a higher pedestal of stability and progress.

Unhindered by our partners who have perfected the art of lies and dishonesty, we are the people's hope and we will not fail this nation and future generations. We are poised for a break with the past and together, we will zoom into a new horizon of happiness and comfort.

A new Zimbabwe is just our vote away. A new Zimbabwe is well within reach if we exercise our right to vote for the benefit of the nation and for the good of posterity by voting Morgan Tsvangirai and the MDC.

2. A party with a plan-a party ready to govern

Given our record in this inclusive government, you can trust us to steer the ship of governance.

And yes, we pledge service and sacrifice.

We pledge commitment and qualitative difference.

We pledge selfless service to the people of Zimbabwe and yes, our record speaks for itself!

And yes, we have a bankable plan once we are elected into office. Sceptics who say this party has no policies have had to revise their judgments in the wake of the policy platform that we have availed to the nation in recent months.

Towards the end of last year, we launched JUICE, our jobs plan in which we were clear that job creation will be among the biggest challenges of our new administration.

At our hugely successful policy conference, we recently launched our policy document, **the Agenda for Real Transformation (ART)**.

We demonstrated our ART of governance. We went into great detail regarding our plan to tackle the ills of this nation after 33 years of bad governance, corruption, primitive accumulation by the elite, lies and deception.

As we officially begin our campaign, we are also launching our manifesto. It is not just a statement of intent, but a pledge and a promise of the tangible deliverables that we will usher in from the moment Zimbabweans give us their vote and their trust.

We have never underestimated the challenges this nation faces after three decades of mismanagement, but just ushering in a caring government will go a long way in addressing the major ills of the previous administration that had no care and no love for the people.

So yes, we do have a plan that will poise us as a nation towards real change and the positive transformation of our lives.

3. **Our programme of action**

Our determination to transform the lives of Zimbabweans is captured in our manifesto.

While positive change is necessary, we know that change must have substance to address the various challenges we face as a country.

Change is not just an empty slogan but as shown in JUICE, ART and our Manifesto, it is backed by a bankable plan.

We need transformation. We need not only to change the government, but to transform it; its work ethos, its culture and its general attitude towards the people that it purports to serve. An MDC Government will be a caring Government; not a Government that instils fear in the people that it is supposed to serve.

We believe sincerely in the idea of Servant Leadership – that those of us who seek to govern do so as servants of the people not their masters. We want Zimbabweans to be free to express themselves; to challenge their leaders and bring them to account without the fear of arrest and incarceration. We say, “No to Government through Fear” and “Yes to Government through Caring”. We have to hit the ground running if we are to inspire confidence to the people of Zimbabwe who are determined to vote for service and sacrifice and we are fully prepared to do that.

We have a programme to enhance good governance and strengthen our governance culture, to grow our economy, to build a robust and modern infrastructure and to defend the people’s rights and interests.

Our main programmes as an MDC government are **job creation** and **rural transformation**.

The major social challenge in the country is job creation and to this end and as outlined in our JUICE policy, we pledge to create one million jobs in the first five years of our administration. So give me the job and you will get the job done.

Our rural areas need to be modernised and to have easy access to key services. Rural areas are where the majority of the people of this country live and a truly caring government must ensure food security in these areas, access to electricity, a good road network, and affordable health and education. This will now be part of a government programme to ensure this happens. Our main thrust will be to improve agricultural productivity by making maximum use of available resources.

We have seen that through simple technologies such as Drip Irrigation, yields can be easily enhanced even in areas of low rainfall. We will promote Drip Irrigation and related technologies in rural areas and resettlement areas.

As a party, we were on the forefront in fighting for a devolved State in the new Constitution and we pledge to make sure that we put in place mechanisms to make this work and to make key services accessible and key decisions made in the provinces and at the very local level. We made sure in the Constitution that devolution is not just about power but also about equitable resource allocation. We want people to benefit from resources in their local areas but we also want all Zimbabweans to benefit from national resources. The people of Marange must enjoy the benefits of diamonds but also the people of Mudzi, Kezi, Zaka; people all over the country must also reap the benefits of this important national resource.

It is not just for the elites in privileged positions but for all Zimbabweans.

The first 100 days of an MDC administration

Our manifesto contains a brief summary of the work we will do in our first 100 days in office. Considering our dark past of bad governance, corruption, primitive accumulation and incompetence, there are issues that have to be immediately addressed and I publicly state here that we will deliver on this promise.

Our 100 day projects include convening an international conference to mobilize financial support for economic reconstruction, reviewing all laws and public bodies inhibiting legitimate investment and establishing a transparent process of revenue collection from diamonds and other natural

resources and establishing a Land Commission in compliance with the new Constitution.

On Infrastructure, we will introduce, in the first three months, the Energy Management Act to address energy and electricity shortages as well as a Road Network Development and Management Plan to address the collapsed road infrastructure and construct new ones. We want to address electricity shortages and promote safety on our roads by improving the road network. Revenue from Toll Gates will be used transparently to ensure that road-users see the benefits of their taxes.

In the first 100 days, we will introduce a harmonised Labour Act and review working conditions, including salaries and wages, for our hard working civil servants.

As a party, we believe in the idea of a social contract between government, labour and employers. We will convene a platform at which as government, we will engage business and labour with a view to establishing a robust and effective social contract. There should be no distinction between workers in the civil service and workers in other sectors. We believe in equal treatment of all workers and equal rights for all the working men and women of Zimbabwe. Our party's umbilical cord is closely connected to the Labour movement and we will work to ensure that the pledges and commitments that we made at the National Working People's Convention in February 1999 are fulfilled. No attempt to separate us from workers will succeed because we are a working people's party.

We will introduce laws ensuring free basic education and free basic and emergency health services.

An MDC government will reintroduce loans and grants to tertiary college students and depoliticise food assistance.

Education is critical in the development of a nation and we must continue to support our students. We will never forget that among the people who gathered to form this great party in 1999 were young and energetic students who were enthusiastic for change. We will work to satisfy the dreams of the students' movement.

We also pledge to establish key Commissions enshrined in our Constitution, including the Gender Commission to promote gender equality and women's rights, the Independent Complaints Commission to ensure people have a platform to get redress from the police and other security services and National Peace and Reconciliation Commission to ensure the

process of national healing. This country has gone through traumatic experience, from the colonial times, Gukurahundi after independence, Murambatsvina in 2005 and the sordid violence of 2008. Left unattended, these wounds will fester and poison the nation. We are committed to ensuring that there is redress; that there is a complete departure from the culture of impunity to a culture of accountability.

My administration will decentralise and equip the Registrar-General's Office. It is not necessary for a person in Tsholotsho to have to come to Harare to get a birth certificate or a passport. These services should be provided for locally. We will also implement mechanisms to guarantee the Diaspora vote and harness the skills and capital held in the Diaspora to develop this country. We place immense value in our sons and daughters in the Diaspora, many of whom fled

political turmoil and the economic disaster that visited this country courtesy of ZANU PF's mismanagement. We have a plan to bring them back home to participate in the economic reconstruction of this great country.

We will also introduce and enforce asset disclosure of public officials and strengthening accountability institutions such as Human Rights Commission and the Anti-Corruption Commission.

We will repeal undemocratic laws, free the airwaves to allow for more television and radio stations and the promotion of self-regulation for the media. There is no reason why this great country should be force-fed a single television station when it boasts of so much talent and creativity. An MDC Government will promote choice and will ensure the state broadcaster is fair, impartial and professional.

It will not be an appendage of any political party but a service for the people of Zimbabwe.

We pledge, in the first 100 days, to review the policy and operational role of the National Security Council, which is provided for in the new Constitution. We will review and improve conditions of members of the security services. Our brave men and women in the uniformed forces must be allowed to grow professionally and must be duly rewarded for their service in defence of the nation. We must be proud of them and not fear them. They have represented us well internationally. We will establish a code of conduct for the security services and establish a merit-based system within the security establishment.

4. **Conclusion**

I know you will walk with me to our finest hour of victory in the forthcoming election.

Zimbabweans have always been a heroic people and I am confident that we will rise to the occasion and vote for change and transformation, for service and sacrifice.

We have lost heroes and heroines of change. We have been traumatised. We have suffered as a nation but I boldly declare today that the temporary phase of turmoil, violence, misgovernance and suffering is coming to an end.

As we go back home, we go to announce the end of an era of tyranny. We go to mobilise our communities that our destiny is firmly in our hands and we tell them, with confidence, that this time, we will finish it off.

I have traversed all the provinces of this great country and I have been inspired by the confidence and the national mood for change.

From Binga to Bililima, from Mudzi to Chipinge, I have derived inspiration from the determination of the heroic people of Zimbabwe to consign misgovernance and mediocrity to the dustbin and to embrace a future of hope and dignity under an MDC government.

We have a chance in this forthcoming election of ending our year on a high note!

We are a modern people and we must entrust this country to to a new and younger generation that can cope with the governance dictates of the 21st century.

Those who wish to interact with me can do so on my social media platforms because, once again, we will be shut out of the public media, which has taken a position to cover live in the electronic media, the campaign of President Mugabe and Zanu PF.

My website is www.tsvangirairforpresident2013.com and you can access and browse my facebook page on www.facebook.com/mtsvangirai.

I have always said that yesterday's people cannot provide answers to today's problems. Today's problems need today's people.

The year 2013 has certainly been an eventful year for the resilient people of this country.

It has been a new year of new but exciting things and our vote will keep it that way.

It has been a magnificent sequence of new and exciting dividends for the people as we lurch towards our collective victory that is now very imminent.

A new Constitution, a new President, a new Zimbabwe.

The people will definitely win and our vote will be our ticket to a new Zimbabwe of genuine freedom, transformation and true happiness.

The change we have fought for has truly come at last and I can smell it.

Let me take this opportunity to express my profound gratitude and appreciation to the people and leaders of SADC countries, who have patiently stood by the people of Zimbabwe over the last few years averting a serious crisis of governance.

We are grateful especially to the Facilitator, His Excellency President Jacob Zuma of South Africa and his Facilitation brotherly and sisterly solidarity they have demonstrated.

Their sterling efforts in trying to help steer this country away from catastrophe will be remembered and appreciated by generations long after we are all gone. Countries like South Africa and Botswana have borne the brunt of this country's crisis of governance and it is in the region's interests that the crisis in this country is resolved. SADC represents a close family of nations of this region and an MDC Government will never contemplate ostracising Zimbabwe from SADC. We must all be reminded that SADC is a regional grouping of people of the region not merely a club of leaders of their countries. We are members of SADC for historical, political, geographical, cultural and economic reasons.

Therefore, no individual, whatever their station in life or office, has a right to unilaterally and without consultation with the people of Zimbabwe, pull this country out of SADC. The people of Zimbabwe will not allow inflated egos to stand in the way of their mutually beneficial relationship with their fellow brothers and sisters in the SADC region.

Today, I declare boldly that we have begun our lap into the last mile of our remarkable journey to democracy and prosperity.

We have a chance, through our vote, to move for more!

I Thank You. Let us remain faithful in the Lord.

May God Bless You All, the People of Zimbabwe!

