

# **OPENING REMARKS BY THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY AND POWER DEVELOPMENT AT THE FARMERS' INDABA, CROWNE PLAZA, 18<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2015, 0830-1600 HOURS**

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## **1.0. SALUTATIONS**

- Respected Senior Government Officials here present,
- Zimbabwe Energy Regulatory Authority (ZERA) Board members
- Chief Executive Officer of ZERA, Engineer Gloria Magombo;
- Representatives of the Farmers Unions
- Energy Stakeholders here present
- Distinguished guests
- Members of the media
- Ladies and Gentlemen

## **2.0. INTRODUCTION**

2.1. Provision of sufficient food to the nation is a great responsibility bestowed on our farmers. As you are aware, food security is one of the key catalysers of broad socio-economic development as aptly highlighted in the **Zimbabwe** Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (ZIMASSET) Food security Cluster.

2.2. Support to the agricultural sector is therefore imperative. A food secure country is indeed a productive, peaceful and has innovative citizens.

## **3. 0. ENERGY IN THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR**

3.1. Energy plays a critical role in in the agricultural sector through increased and diversified production, value addition and employment creation at farm and downstream level.

- 3.2. It is against this background that this inaugural indaba is coming at an opportune time to discuss, among other issues how energy may be used efficiently and effectively within the agricultural sector given its constrained supply.
- 3.3. Let me hasten to say the agricultural sector is one of the key priority areas which ordinarily is spurred from unplanned load shedding.

#### **4.0. ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR**

- 4.1. Government is, however, aware of the vast potential which can be saved and harnessed by the agricultural sector if every farmer embraces energy efficiency, energy conservation and adopts renewable energy technologies.
- 4.2. Through the National Energy Policy, Government has demonstrated its commitment to promote energy efficiency in all sectors of the economy including the agriculture sector. One of the policy's strategy is:
- *To improve the efficient use of energy in agriculture, provision of information and the use of low-energy equipment.*
- 4.3. This Indaba is one such activity to share and appraise each other on how we can best utilise the limited energy we currently have.

#### **5.0. ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF POWER**

- 5.0. Biogas and biomass are also other sources of energy which farmers should consider to power their activities. Government is encouraged by research which is underway to establish the extent to which ethanol may be used in curing tobacco.

5.2. Such low hanging intervention, ladies and gentlemen, will go a long way to ensure the country has reliable and safe supply. It will also ensure the agricultural enjoy uninterrupted supply of power for the benefit of the nation.

## **6.0. TARIFFS**

6.1. The issue of tariff for farmers is another aspect worth noting. The Government is aware of the cost of power which is one of the challenges hampering production in the farming sector.

6.2. To this end, the Government shall be working flat out to ensure farmers access cheap off peak power through installing of smart meters. These meters will enable farmers to use energy at a time when the tariff will be low thereby boosting production.

## **7.0. CONCLUSION**

7.1. Ladies and Gentlemen, it is my hope that as you deliberate and network today, all participants here present will share some of the measures they are taking to save energy for the benefit of their community and the country.

7.2. Small savings cumulatively will result in meaningful savings which can be productively utilised for the development of our country.

7.3. Furthermore, the country is endowed with a variety of renewable energy and fossil energy resources which need to be exploited in a sustainable manner.

7.4. Renewable energy is a local resource that should be fully utilised, as it can bring both access to energy and environmental benefits.

With these remarks ladies and gentlemen I declare the 2015 Farmers Indaba officially open and wish you all fruitful deliberations.

**I thank you.**