



ZIMBABWE

Guest of Honour's Speech at the CFU Congress, 2018

Hon. Air Chief Marshall (Rtd) Perrance Shiri, Minister of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement

27 September 2018

SALUTATIONS

- Cabinet Ministers here present;
- The President of the World Farmers' Organization, Dr Theo de Jager;
- The President of the Commercial Farmers' Union;
- Senior Government Officials here present;
- Private Sector representatives;
- Representatives of Farmer Unions;
- Farmers here present;
- Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is my pleasure and honour to be addressing you, distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen at this year's Commercial Farmer's Union (CFU) congress. I am informed that this year; 2018, marks the 75th anniversary of the CFU as a representative body for commercial agriculture in Zimbabwe. It is pleasing to note that you have championed the cause for organized agriculture, to increase productivity on farms and to engage the government in finding solutions to bringing investment on the land so as to improve the livelihoods of many.

I would like to thank you humbly for this invitation, and to convey to you my warmest congratulations as you commemorate this anniversary. For an organization to survive so long, it must have the capacity to adapt to changing conditions and in the process continue to fulfil a need.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I share the common understanding that agriculture is not only necessary to Zimbabwe's economic recovery, but it is sufficient to contribute between 16-20% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 40% to exports while providing a solid source of livelihood to 67% of the country's populace. Today as we gather to commemorate CFU's 75th anniversary, I am convinced that the existence of a body of this nature which brings cohesion and direction to farmers for the

smooth and efficient conduct of their businesses in an organized manner, will positively contribute towards the growth of the sector.

On its, part government is committed to creating conditions in which the agricultural industry can prosper. Of course there characteristics that we cannot change, such: the climatic conditions bequeathed us by nature, the vagaries of its moods and the disasters that sometimes befall us. But in partnership, we can minimise the effects of this and optimise the positive elements that our country possesses in abundance.

Such partnership should bring restructuring of the of agricultural industry, improved productivity, an opening of farming opportunities for those who have been hitherto excluded, and measures to correct past injustices. It should include co-operation in working out measures that will lead to farmers enjoying the same rights and security as workers in other industries.

I would like to give the assurance that the government regards a healthy agricultural sector as indispensable for the continued welfare of Zimbabwe. We will continue to recognise the Commercial farmers' Union as a critical player in this regard. Therefore, I will give you the firm assurance that, in detailing with the questions I posed earlier on, the government will ensure that your Union is fully consulted.

The challenge being faced by the agricultural sector cannot be left to government alone, but can be effectively addressed if we move together. I also urge you to work in harmony with other famers

union, suppliers of agricultural inputs, machinery and equipment to enhance the capacity of farmers to produce more.

Government is working on programs to capacitate you and equip your operations .Organized farming is therefore a necessary condition for economic growth.

May I wish you success in your discussions, as you boldly face the challenge of defining our role in the Zimbabwe we are building together.

I Thank You