



MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

BY THE

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE AND WILDLIFE
HONOURABLE DR SITHEMBISO G. G. NYONI

AFRICAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT (AMCEN)

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Excellences

As the Southern African Development Community (**SADC**) chair, allow me to commend the excellent preparatory work done by our experts and the Secretariat under the able leadership of Her Excellency Assafa Fitsum, the president of AMCEN, Minister of Planning and Development of Ethiopia, as represented here by His Excellency Seyoun Makonen, the State Minister. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Government and the people of Cote d' Ivoire for the warm hospitality accorded to my delegation since our arrival in Abidjan.

I also wish to convey my heartfelt condolences to the nation of Botswana and Africa at large on the passing on of the Honourable Minister of Environment and Tourism Dumezweni Mthimkhulu.

May I also welcome the announcement here by the UNFCCC Secretary General on the increase of participation for Global South Civil Society in UNFCCC Processes.

Zimbabwe welcomes and greatly appreciates this Special AMCEN Meeting made possible by the Government of Cote d' Ivoire. The theme "**Raising Ambition for Accelerating Action on Drought Resilience and Combating Land Degradation and desertification**", is indeed a call to action for all of us.

Zimbabwe supports multilateral action in Africa's collective engagement in the global environmental agenda related to desertification, nature and biodiversity loss, pollution and climate change whilst also seizes emerging opportunities for sustainable development of the continent.

Excellences,

Zimbabwe recognizes the threats from land degradation, desertification and droughts that are associated with several drivers which range from natural to human induced activities.

SADC is largely dependent on rain fed agriculture and is currently battling with the El'nino induced drought which has resulted in serious food insecurity and limited livelihood options which puts pressure on the biophysical environment and may lead to land degradation. This calls for the need to build drought resilient mechanisms, accordingly, Zimbabwe has adopted conservation farming, *pfumvudza/intwasa* programme as a way of hedging against droughts and ensure that communities remain food secure.

Excellences,

Collaborations, Partnerships and resource mobilization is key to addressing aforementioned environmental challenges. In this regard, Zimbabwe is implementing several projects with a focus on sustainable land and forest management under the National Development Strategy 1.

The nexus between desertification, land degradation, droughts, climate change and wetlands is often overlooked. Wetlands play a crucial role in

mitigating the impacts of climate as they act as carbon sinks yet they are also under threat from degradation.

As Zimbabwe, we are managing our ecosystems through various initiatives such as sustainable forest and land management practices supported by a robust legal framework. The upcoming Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (CoP15), which Zimbabwe is hosting from 23 -31 July 2025 in Victoria Falls under the theme “**Protecting Wetlands for our Common Future**” seeks to address several key issues related to wetlands conservation and sustainable use.

Against this background, Zimbabwe cordially invites you all to come and participate at this Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, COP15 which will be held in the pristine environment of Victoria Falls, one of the natural Seven Wonders of the World.

Thank you Mr. President