



## **ZHOCD Statement on President Mnangagwa's Commitment to Upholding Constitutional Principles**

The Heads of Christian Denominations in Zimbabwe (ZHOCD), comprising apex mother bodies of Christian Churches including, the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ), the Union for Development of Apostolic Churches in Zimbabwe Africa (UDACIZA), the Zimbabwe Catholics Bishops Conference (ZCBC) and Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC), welcomes the recent statement made by His Excellency President Dr. Emmerson D. Mnangagwa on July 4, 2024, affirming his commitment to uphold the Constitution of Zimbabwe. In his address at the commissioning of the Mutare Teachers College's fruit juice and water processing plant, President Mnangagwa pledged not to seek a third term in office, thus reaffirming his respect for the constitutional mandate that limits the presidential term to two terms (Section 91 (2)) which section states that *"A person is disqualified for election as President or appointment as Vice-President if he or she has already held office as President for two terms, whether continuous or not, and for the purpose of this subsection three or more years' service is deemed to be a full term."*

By publicly committing not to extend his presidency beyond the legal limits, the President has taken a significant step towards reinforcing democratic norms and promoting national unity. This commitment not only upholds the rule of law but also sets a positive precedent for political stability, smooth leadership transitions and a guarantee on the predictability of our political and electoral processes. It is also a sterling example of servant leadership, echoing the words of our Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew 20:28 which reads, *"Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."*

The Church has a longstanding history of advocacy for constitutionalism and democratic governance in Zimbabwe. The church's involvement dates back to the Lancaster House negotiations, the 2006 Zimbabwe We Want National Vision Discussion Document which among other things propagated the importance of a homegrown constitution and ultimately, the significant role in the crafting of the 2013 Constitution. Through efforts such as election observation and constitutional awareness



campaigns, the Church has consistently supported democratic processes and the respect for constitutional principles. As an institution mandated and called by God to the work of justice, peace, and reconciliation, the Church views the position by His Excellency as a crucial milestone in advancing the values of constitutionalism and democratic integrity in Zimbabwe.

As the Church, we acknowledge and appreciate the work that the President, through both his previous and current administration, is doing to contribute to the transformative development of our great country. We are encouraged by the prospects of enhanced quality of life of the citizens and a significant boost to the economy that these developments will make. The legacy His Excellency is building through the various large scale developmental projects will no doubt leave an indelible mark on our nation's history and will set the country on an upward, high growth trajectory.

Further, it is the Church's enduring hope that during his remaining term in Office, His Excellency will also prioritise the agenda on national unity and reconciliation, intensify the fight against corruption, continue to promote public sector accountability, industrialization; and reforms that enhance judiciary independence and justice.

Therefore, the Church calls upon all Zimbabweans to honor the President's decision and to support him in the completion of his constitutional term. It also calls upon all Zimbabweans to embrace a spirit of peaceful and transparent leadership renewal. It is imperative that the process remains free from intimidation, violence, and manipulation to ensure national stability and the consolidation of our democracy. The ZHOCD encourages every citizen to support efforts that promote good governance and foster an inclusive democracy.

The Church will continue to pray for peace, justice, and prosperity for all Zimbabweans and remain committed to advocating for the rights and welfare of our people. We stand ready to engage constructively with all sectors to uphold the principles of the Constitution and strengthen our democratic institutions.



**“Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore, whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment.”**

**Romans 13: 1-2**

**By order of the Zimbabwe Heads of Christian Denominations (ZHOCD) Bishops**