



ADDRESS

BY

**THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF
ZIMBABWE,
HIS EXCELLENCY, DR. E. D. MNANGAGWA**

AT

**THE AFRICA FERTILISER AND SOIL HEALTH
SUMMIT**

NAIROBI, KENYA

9 MAY 2024

President of the Republic of Kenya, His Excellency,
Dr William Samoei Ruto;

Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Government

His Excellency the Chairperson of the Africa Union
Commission, Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat;

Ambassador, Josefa Leonel Correia Sacko, the African
Union Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural
Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable
Environment;

Development Partners, Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am honoured to be addressing you at this important
Summit which is reflective of the importance that we
attach to the soil as a vital resource to stimulate
agriculture productivity to guarantee food security and
sovereignty across our beloved African continent.

Regrettably, low fertiliser use and poor soil health
continue to undermine sustainable agriculture

production and productivity particularly among communal and small-holder farmers. This is compounded by climate change, inadequate infrastructure and mechanisation. Hence, the need to deliberately support and increase investments in agriculture, particularly for women and the youth cannot be over-emphasized.

It is unfortunate that despite the inherent potential, Africa currently spends billions of dollars in food and fertilizer imports per year. Greater efforts must be made to leverage the availability of raw materials for the local production of mineral fertilizers and reduce our over-reliance on imports.

Similarly, agriculture extension, communication and education programmes should be strengthened with regards to scaling up fertilizer consumption to reach the target of 50 kg per hectare.

The African Development Bank is commended for setting up a Fertilizer Fund, aimed at boosting local

production of fertilisers, as well as research, science, innovation and technology development.

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Guests;

Zimbabwe has not been spared from the adverse effects of climate change with our sub-region currently experiencing an El Nino induced drought. However, my Government continues to implement **“The Agricultural, Food, Systems, and Rural Transformation Strategy”** which, among other aspects, prioritises improved policies, investment, finance, and markets for fertilizer and soil health management. Additionally, access to and affordability of organic fertilizers for sustainable soil management practices and interventions are being broadened.

Zimbabwe has made great strides in implementing a soil health-based improvement in production and productivity of crops and livestock.

Village specific information on soil health is now available through improved mobility and ICT gadgets.

Through such interventions, which were also anchored by the Climate Smart Pfumvudza/Intwasa Programme, Zimbabwe realised food security and recorded surpluses in wheat, over the last three consecutive years.

My Administration stands ready to broaden partnerships, synergies and investments to enhance crop yields. Several opportunities exist for investors to set up new entities or partner with current local companies through either upgrading existing or introducing new technology to scale up fertilizer production in our country.

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests;

Zimbabwe endorses the Nairobi Declaration, Soil Initiative for Africa Framework, and the Africa Fertilizers Soil Health 10-year Action Plan.

Going forward, it is critically important for us to invest in strategic institutions mandated to provide leadership and mechanisms to meet our desired goals.

As host to the African Centre for Fertilizer Development, Zimbabwe notes that the Centre remains a critical cog in promoting research on soil health and fertilizer development. We, thus, welcome the commitment to fully operationalize and support the Africa Centre for Fertilizer Development, which was the brainchild of our august body and whose strategic mandate is aligned with the agenda of this Summit.

In concluding, may I express my gratitude to the President of the Republic of Kenya, His Excellency Dr William Ruto, for the warm welcome and hospitality accorded to me and my delegation since our arrival. I also convey our deepest condolences to the Government and people of Kenya on the untimely loss of our dear brothers and sisters due to the climate change-induced devastating floods. Our prayers and sympathies are with you during this difficult time.

I thank you.