



**ZIMBABWE REVENUE AUTHORITY COMMISSIONER GENERAL'S
SPEECH ON THE LAUNCH OF THE DURBAN KASUMBALESA
(NORTH SOUTH CORRIDOR) TIME RELEASE STUDY REPORT:
HARARE 7 FEBRUARY 2025**

SALUTATIONS;

Allow me to acknowledge and pay respects to the following:

- ★ Honourable SADC chair of this meeting.
- ★ Regional Customs Commissioners/Customs Director Generals/Customs Directors here present. I welcome you to Harare
- ★ Member of the National Trade Facilitation Committee and the Border Efficiency Management Systems. You are a key stakeholder
- ★ Senior Government officials who have come to support and witness this unveiling of the Time Release Study report.
- ★ ZIMRA Management and the entire staff members in attendance.
- ★ Management teams from the various Shipping and Clearing Agents Associations, here present, and those in absentia
- ★ Colleagues from the private sector.
- ★ Representatives and from regional Customs administrations and government entities.
- ★ SADC Secretariat team.
- ★ Ladies and Gentlemen

- I am delighted to address you today standing in for the Commissioner General of the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority and in personal capacity as the Commissioner Customs and Excise.
- Our region has made significant strides in promoting trade facilitation along all major trade corridors. We have made good progress, we still have challenges and we must work towards addressing these challenges if we are to uplift the welfare and well-being of the people and consumers in our Region.
- As you are and may be aware, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has been implementing the Trade Facilitation Programme (TFP) with the support of donor partners. This program aims to ensure the efficient movement of goods within our region, reducing the cost of trade and creating efficiency and effectiveness in all cross-border trade facilitation measures.

- Several initiatives have been undertaken under the Trade Facilitation Programmes [TFP], including the Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) scheme, One Stop Border Posts (OSBP), Coordinated Border Management (CBM), and Time Release Studies (TRS). These efforts have improved the clearance and transit times for goods moving through our region.
- The Time Release Study [TRS] had the specific objective to measure efficiency in clearance of goods crossing the border posts and the seaport at Durban along the North-South Corridor.
- International best practice approach, such as the World Customs Organization instruments were used in the study.
- The specific objectives of the study were:
 1. Analyse bottlenecks and measure the efficiency in clearance of goods crossing border posts.

2. Appraise and analyse the impact of, and lessons learnt from the Covid, 19 and other externalities on border management.

3. Make recommendations for the mitigation of identified impediments on trade and logistics.

4. Have an Action Plan to address and monitor recommended solutions from the study.

- The Regional TRS on the North-South Corridor revealed some challenges that need to be addressed. Read through the report and pick out issues that must be attended to so that we derive the benefits from this study.
- Today, I am, and we are pleased to officiate at the launch of the Durban Port to Kasumbalesa Time Release Study report, whose findings reveal that the average clearance and transit time for north bound cargo from Durban Port to Kasumbalesa is **15 days, 21 hours, and 5 minutes** from the study undertaken.

- During the study, bottlenecks at various border posts along the North South Corridor, including Beitbridge and Chirundu OSBP were observed and analysed.
- Other inhibitors related to multiplicity of agencies at the same control points, various charges contributing to tariff barriers and other lengthy processes contributing to non-tariff barriers were noted for analysis.
- The report thus presents insights through its findings as well as recommendations for each of the challenges noted.
- To overcome these challenges, the recommendations derived from the findings and conclusions in the report require our serious consideration for implementation.
- Chief among these are the need for cross border coordination and harmonization of processes, border upgrades covering both the physical and digital infrastructure, embracing technological developments in control and facilitation processes, a collaborate approach with other stakeholders through sensitization

programmes, including consistent stakeholder engagement programmes and effective monitoring and evaluation of agreed action plans.

- These measures will go a long way in creating the consistency and predictability that comes with coordinated border management systems supported by effective information sharing amongst the administrators along the corridor. We believe that by addressing these challenges and implementing these recommendations, we can significantly improve the efficiency of our regional trade facilitation efforts.
- With regards the Border upgrades and modernisation, I am happy to share with this meeting that, the Zimbabwean Government is making and has made significant strides to ensure that work on the refurbishment and modernisation of Chirundu Border, our border with Zambia is under taken. I am quite aware that during the phase of the works, flow of traffic will be disrupted, but our officials at the border will do

everything possible to ensure that the border crossing time is kept to the minimum barest level. Yes, the construction must happen, BUT border crossing times must be kept with the standards.

- I would like to thank all involved stakeholders along the way for their participation in the study in particular the following:

- ✓ Leadership of the various customs administrations to ensure that the study was a success.
- ✓ customs management that supervised this work in each jurisdiction represented in the study.
- ✓ members of the technical working groups in each territory made up of public and private sector participants
- ✓ various communities within each territory, including businesses, crew and public who contributed insights through their responses to questionnaires.
- ✓ the two Short Term Experts who guided and supervised the whole study and;

✓ the Southern African Development Community

Secretariat and their supporting partners for the various resources provided.

- I would also like to thank the various organizers of this event including the logistics- and resources committed to make this event possible. I was briefed that the logistical arrangements at the International Airport, the transportation to this venue was not seamless in certain instances. Airport was not smooth and fluid. I apologise. I look forward to our continued collaboration in promoting trade facilitation in our region and trust that this report will provide critical information to enable the required business reforms to that end.

I thank you for your active attention and wish us all the best in the execution of the event programme before us.

I thank you.