

PUBLIC SEMINAR

The **UJ Centre for Africa-China Studies**, in collaboration with the **UJ Library**, cordially invites you to a public seminar on:

A New Dispensation Tackling Accumulated Challenges: Understanding Zimbabwe's Future Prospects



SPEAKER: H.E. Dr David Hamadziripi, Ambassador of the Republic of Zimbabwe to the Republic of South Africa

RESPONDENT: Prof Chris Landsberg, Professor and SARChI Chair of African Diplomacy and Foreign Policy at the University of Johannesburg

MODERATOR: Dr Nolitha Vukuza, Senior Executive Director in the Vice-Chancellor's Office at the University of Johannesburg

VENUE: Chinua Achebe Auditorium, Level 6, UJ Library, APK Campus

Date: Thursday 15 August 2019 • TIME: 17h00-19h00

RSVP: Zizipho Masiza, ujci@uj.ac.za • All welcome



BACKGROUND

In April 2018, the Government of the Republic of Zimbabwe released a policy document entitled Towards an Upper-Middle Income Economy by 2030, which sought to share key initiatives and commitments aimed at transforming the country into an upper-middle economy by 2030 with the international community as well as domestic shareholders.

While pledging to remain loyal to the principles that animated Zimbabwe's pursuit for independence, the Zimbabwean government acknowledged that the document followed 'more than 18 years of economic isolation and the erosion of investor confidence, which has seen Zimbabwe losing phenomenal ground in terms of development', and stated that it was meant to herald a new era.

The isolation it referred to has generated a range of challenges, including economic stagnation and a loss of political and economic credibility, especially among those countries that have imposed sanctions on Zimbabwe in recent years.

While some of these challenges are specific to Zimbabwe, they cannot be entirely divorced from dynamics elsewhere in Africa, and indeed the world. In recent years, bigger economies such as China in Asia and South Africa and Nigeria in Africa have also registered lower rates of economic growth. What is more specific to Zimbabwe is its 'brain drain', or its loss of people with professional and technical skills that are crucial to its economic recovery.

Immense potential

Zimbabwe's potential is immense. If properly harnessed, its literacy rate of almost 95% could help to transform the country into an example for the rest of Southern Africa as well as Africa. Extensive arable land and vast mineral wealth are among its endowments that could drive economic growth. The responsibility for changing Zimbabwe's current fortunes for the better ultimately rests with the Zimbabwean government, as well as its citizens. However, the first step in the quest to triumph over current circumstances is to correctly diagnose what has gone wrong, and then to identify remedial action.

BACKGROUND (continued)

Objectives of the seminar

Southern Africa is undergoing leadership transitions in Botswana, South Africa, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, which will hopefully consolidate democracy in the region. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) also has a key role to play in Zimbabwe's economic recovery, among others by easing the exchange of exports and imports. Ideally, SADC should also provide effective and principled oversight over all its members, including Zimbabwe. Beyond Southern Africa, the recently ratified African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCTA) has also rekindled hope of intensified intra-African trade, a highly significant development in an era when insular politics seem to be in vogue.

Following its isolation by mainly Western states, Zimbabwe has proactively pursued a 'look East' strategy, notably intensified trade relations with China. This remains controversial, with detractors arguing that China's policy of non-interference in the domestic affairs of African countries has helped to prop up odious leaderships.

Against this background, H.E. Dr Hamadziripi will provide an insider's perspective on how the Zimbabwean government views the current situation, and aims to begin unlocking the country's potential. He will also address a range of other issues such as forging unity among citizens, combating corruption, entrenching responsive and accountable governance, and creating conditions attractive to old and new investors.

Parameters for the discussion

- What are Zimbabwe's economic and social realities?
- What are the main causes of Zimbabwe's current situation, from the viewpoint of the Zimbabwean government?
- What process was followed to formulate Towards an Upper-Middle Income Economy by 2030, what milestones are envisaged, and within what time frames?
- What can other African countries and the international community do to help place Zimbabwe on the path to economic recovery?

ABOUT THE PARTICIPANTS



H.E. Dr David Hamadziripi is Ambassador of the Republic of Zimbabwe to the Republic of South Africa; Non-resident Ambassador-designate of the Republic of Zimbabwe to the Kingdom of Lesotho; and Non-resident Ambassador-designate of the Republic of Zimbabwe to the Republic of Mauritius.



Chris Landsberg is Professor and SARChI Chair of African Diplomacy and Foreign Policy at the University of Johannesburg (UJ), and a Senior Associate of the UJ School of Leadership. He is a former Head of Politics and International Relations at UJ. Landsberg was educated at Rand Afrikaans University (now the University of Johannesburg); Rhodes, and Oxford, and holds MPhil and DPhil international relations degrees (Oxon). He studied as a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford, and is a former Hamburg Fellow at Stanford University in the United States. Previously he was director of the Centre for Policy Studies in Johannesburg, and co-founder and former co-director of the Centre for Africa's International Relations at the University of the Witwatersrand. He is a co-editor of seven books, including *From Cape to Congo: Southern Africa's Emerging Security Challenges*; and *South Africa in Africa: The Post-Apartheid Era*. Landsberg's single-authored titles include *The Diplomacy of Transformation: South African Foreign Policy and Statecraft*; and *The Quiet Diplomacy of Transition: International Politics and South Africa's Transition*.



Dr Nolitha Vukuza is Senior Executive Director in the Vice-Chancellor's Office at the University of Johannesburg. Prior to joining UJ, she served as the International Representative of the Minister of Higher Education and Training at UNESCO, the OECD, the ILO and the EU, as well as in Switzerland and Germany. She was Head of Corporate Relations at SAB Miller between 1997 and 2006, and served in the South African parliament between 2009 and 2011. Between 1986 and 1996, she lectured at the University of Transkei. Dr Vukuza holds a PhD in Education Policy Studies from the University of Stellenbosch.