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A Peaceful Zimbabwe For All Generations

## NPRC INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY COMEMORATIVE STATEMENT

As we commemorate International Women's Day running under the theme: **'Women in leadership: Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19 world'**, the NPRC celebrate the courage and determination by women of Zimbabwe who have played and continue to play extraordinary roles in fostering peace in their communities and the nation at large.

The NPRC has made significant strides to ensure gender balance in the recruitment and appointment of staff at decision making levels from the Executive Secretary right down to the various NPRC structures such as the four thematic Committees namely Prevention and non-recurrence, Victim Support Gender and Diversity, Healing and Reconciliation and Research and Knowledge Management. The appointments are in line with the NPRC Act chapter 10:32, Section 9(c) which mandates the Commission to ensure 'Gender equity in all its structures.

The 2021 IWD theme presents an opportunity for NPRC to celebrate the courage, determination and the dedication to Peace Building in Zimbabwe by NPRC Women Leaders at the level of Commissioners, Secretariat and all its external Committees.

Recognition of women's potential influence and their participation in decision making is a prerequisite for the sustainability and durability of peace and social cohesion processes at both local and national level. While there has been progress in the increased number of women appointed to decision-making positions in peace building bodies, women remain significantly underrepresented in other bodies such as politics. Traditional and religious norms, practices, and beliefs about women's roles in society limit women's participation mainly to community and local mechanisms, hampering their role in decision making.

While local structures and community mechanisms are equally important as they form the basis upon which broader engagements in peace and reconciliation processes are built, women's participation in peace and reconciliation processes must go beyond the local level. There is need to uphold women's rights and fully leverage the potential of women's leadership capacities. The perspectives of women and girls in all their diversity must be integrated in peace building and conflict prevention efforts at all levels. The NPRC thus encourages women to transit from traditional roles of peace building into more formal structures where they can also assume leadership roles which are currently dominated by men.

The 2021 International Women's Day also comes at a time when the COVID 19 has wrecked socio-economic havoc across the globe. The implications of COVID-19 for the Women, Peace and Security agenda are visible on its core pillars of protection, prevention, participation, relief and recovery. Emergencies increase the risk of gender-based violence (GBV) and conflicts in households and communities. This calls for supporting women's substantive participation and agency in conflict prevention, resolution, and peacebuilding. In the same vain, the NPRC recognizes the brave women and women's organisations who have been on the frontline, positively contributing to peace, conflict resolution and social cohesion by ensuring that fellow women victims of GBV and conflicts receive necessary support during this pandemic.

The NPRC reiterates its commitment to the full involvement of women at all stages of peace and reconciliation processes, includingg in decision-making, in line with Section 17 of the Constitution which calls upon the State and its Agencies to promote full participation of women in all spheres of Zimbabwean society on the basis of equality with men. Furthermore, in line with the provisions of the NPRC Act chapter 10:32, Section 9, the Commission strives to include gender imperatives in its structures and all aspects of it's work. **HAPPY INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY**

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