

Zimbabwe: Belarus Deals Get Presidential Nod

HARARE, Zimbabwe, November 18, 2015 (The Herald) — President Mugabe has granted the nod to a number of investment deals with Belarus that will see the Eastern European country bringing in machinery for various sectors.

Implementation of part of the deals saw Mines and Mining Development Minister Walter Chidhakwa and Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe Governor Dr John Mangudya sign a joint venture agreement with Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko's envoy led by General Viktor Sheiman at Munhumutapa offices in Harare. Gen Sheiman is the administrator of the affairs of President Lukashenko.

A meeting between President Mugabe and Gen Sheiman preceded the signing ceremony that was officiated by Vice President Emmerson Mnangagwa. Zimbabwe and Belarus signed investment deals in July this year when VP Mnangagwa visited the European country.

Speaking to the media after the meeting, Gen Sheiman said President Mugabe expressed his desire to see cooperation between the two countries soar. He said a number of Zimbabwean Government officials among them VP Mnangagwa, had been to Belarus where they acquainted themselves with the opportunities that the country could tap from.

"We discussed in detail the cooperation between the Republic of Zimbabwe and the Republic of Belarus," said Gen Sheiman. "The President was interested in our opportunities and he also explained the opportunities on the Zimbabwean side. "President Mugabe approved the directions of our bilateral cooperation and he gave the green light to cooperations under the following directions, delivery of mining equipment to the Republic of Zimbabwe, delivery of agricultural machinery and equipment to the Republic of Zimbabwe

"In the nearest time, we will sign contract for delivery of Belarusian machinery here and together with delivery of machinery, we will create a huge service centre here in Zimbabwe and we will teach Zimbabwean people to work in this service centre and to work with Belarusian machinery and equipment in general.

"As such, we will cooperate in delivering Belarusian machinery. Also the President approved cooperation in the area of agriculture." Gen Sheiman said the agreement on agriculture would see Belarus bring machinery for the processing of agricultural products and delivery of agricultural machinery and equipment.

He said they also discussed about the creation of joint ventures in the extraction of gold and other precious minerals that was later signed between the two countries.

"We also discussed cooperation in the field of electric energy, construction of roads, houses and bridges. Also, we discussed the teaching of Zimbabwean students in many universities of the Republic of Belarus. We are going to big scale bilateral cooperation and this is very optimistic," said Gen Sheiman.

Minister Chidhakwa said the signing of the joint venture agreement between the two countries would see the country exploit its minerals especially gold. "This agreement seeks to provide a framework for us to access capital equipment from Belarus and also to access technical know-how particularly as it relates to mining on the rivers.

"You know that Government took a decision that mining on rivers is going to be a monopoly of Government. We are implementing that by getting ourselves a technical partner who will work with us. "We want to make sure that not only do we extract the minerals from the rivers, but we are also able to rehabilitate the rivers so that generations to come will continue to enjoy the water," said Minister Chidhakwa.

He said exploratory work had started on the Save River, while a number of other rivers with minerals would also be explored and mined using the latest technology from Belarus.