



PRESS RELEASE

Fight Inequality Alliance-Zimbabwe

Wednesday, **12 January 2022**

Fight Inequality Alliance -Zimbabwe participates in the Global Week of Action

The Fight Inequality Alliance-Zimbabwe will participate and calls upon citizens to join in the Global Week of Action Against Inequality from the **15th to the 22nd of January 2022**. The alliance and the Global Week of Action seek to respond to the rising poverty levels and the widening gap between the very rich and the poor.

During this week, citizens from across the globe will unite to highlight the need for urgent actions to address the corrosive effects of the excessive concentration of wealth in the hands of unaccountable elites. In Zimbabwe, the Alliance will convene various platforms to channel ideas and alternatives to duty bearers and solution holders highlighting the urgent reasons of why addressing deep-rooted inequality is central to securing the constitutional promise of a dignified, just, and peaceful life for all Zimbabweans.

Inequality is on the rise in Zimbabwe. It has become a deep-rooted aspect of Zimbabwean life that unfairly divides Zimbabweans across classes, regions, sex, and generations. Foremost amongst these are the gender and regional inequalities which relegate millions of Zimbabweans into poverty by virtue of being born in a poorer region or of the 'poorer' sex. Securing the future for Zimbabwe requires the nation to re-imagine and transform structural inequalities long considered normal.

The gradual consolidation of wealth and economic power in the hands of a few economic and political elites has over the years facilitated the massive transfer of public wealth and economic opportunities into private hands at the expense of the majority of citizens. These transfers have often been accomplished through high levels of debt accumulation, austerity measures, privatisation, market deregulation and massive tax avoidance. Resultantly, over half the population of Zimbabwe has fallen into poverty over the last decade, with current World Bank figures indicating that 7.9 million Zimbabweans are currently living in extreme poverty of living under the food poverty line of US\$29.80 for each person a month.

The vision to achieve an upper middle-income society in Zimbabwe rightly assumes the implementation of measures to ensure that all Zimbabweans have equal access to a fair share of the national wealth. The 2022 National Budget projection of economic recovery and growth of over 5% in 2022 as well as progress towards a US\$12 billion mining vision by 2023, provide powerful impetus for the nation to unite behind popular measures to restrain the key drivers of inequality and facilitate the equitable distribution of national resources for the benefit of the many and not the few. Amongst several key priorities, the Fight Inequality Alliance will use the opportunity of the Global Week of Action to emphasize the following 5 popular recommendations to address inequality in Zimbabwe:

1. Abandon unjust austerity measures and facilitate robust wealth redistribution programmes targeting marginalized groups and provinces including a universal income grant and legislated fair minimum wage for all Zimbabwean workers.
2. Finance and fully implement devolution of power and authority away from central Harare to lower tiers of government as provided for in the Constitution.
3. Restrain dominant monopolies in key economic sectors such as telecommunications and energy and strengthen consumer protection by regulating the ability of dominant market players to raise consumer prices.
4. Ensure fairer taxation, through the introduction of a redistributive wealth tax and abolition of unjust tax incentives to foreign investors.
5. Institute stronger systems of capital controls and democratic oversight mechanisms to reduce the leakage of public resources through corruption, illicit financial flows and tax avoidance.

All citizens of goodwill are invited to the virtual Protest under the theme **Time To Tax The Rich** from 15 to 22 January 2022 through writing social media posts denouncing inequality in Zimbabwe carrying the hashtags #TaxTheRich #FightInequality, participating in the "Festival of the Poor" rally and spreading the message. The protest will make the case for greater transparency and accountability in existing taxation regimes to mobilize much needed public resources to meet growing public needs in the context of the devastating COVID-19 pandemic.

For more information, contact:

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About the Zimbabwe Fight Inequality Alliance

The Zimbabwe Fight Inequality Alliance is a broad-based network of 18 members comprising of social movements, women's rights groups, faith-based organisations, labour unions and individuals committed to challenging and reversing the unfair distribution of wealth, power, opportunities, social status, access and control of resources in Zimbabwe. The Alliance exists to strengthen collective action to transform Zimbabwe's highly unequal society and provide a common platform of action to build a just, equitable and prosperous nation. The Fight Inequality Alliance envisions a Zimbabwe in which wealth, power, opportunities, social status, access and control of resources are distributed in a just and equitable manner to enable all Zimbabweans to enjoy their full rights, dignity and an acceptable standard of living as full citizens of their own society.

¹ <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/563161623257944434/pdf/Overcoming-Economic-Challenges-Natural-Disasters-and-the-Pandemic-Social-and-Economic-Impacts.pdf>

