

Rwanda-Zimbabwe Trade and Investment Conference kicked-off today in Kigali convening members of both countries' public and private sectors to explore and agree on areas of collaboration and partnerships.

The conference, which takes place over the next two days will see participants engage and network in various sessions discussing topics such as opportunities for trade and investment, strategies for business growth, and procedures for doing business in both countries.



Rwanda signed agreements with Zimbabwe on the following areas of cooperation on the first day of the conference:

- Memorandum of Understanding on Agriculture and Livestock Development which was signed by Rwanda's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Hon. Vincent Biruta and Zimbabwe's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Hon. Frederick Shava.
- Memorandum of Understanding on Environment and Climate Change which was signed by Rwanda's Minister of Environment, Hon. Jeanne d'Arc Mujawamariya and Zimbabwe's Minister of Environment, Climate, Tourism and Hospitality Industry, Hon. N. M. Ndlovu.
- Memorandum of Understanding on Tourism and Business Events which was signed by the Rwanda Development Board Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Zephania Niyonkuru and Zimbabwe's Minister of Environment, Climate, Tourism and Hospitality Industry, Hon. N. M. Ndlovu.
- Memorandum of Understanding on ICT and e-Government services which was signed by Rwanda's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Hon. Vincent Biruta and Zimbabwe's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Hon. Frederick Shava.
- Memorandum of Understanding between Rwanda's Private Sector Federation (PSF) and the Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries (CZI) which was signed by the PSF Chairperson, Robert Bapfakurera and the CZI Vice-President, Mucha Mkanganwi.

Speaking while officially opening the conference, Hon. Biruta noted: "Rwanda and Zimbabwe enjoy excellent relations that can be attested by the presence of embassies in the two countries. Indeed, as international trade contributes significantly to our economies, the organisation of such conferences is critical in

ensuring business continuity and will facilitate the recovery of our economies from the economic shock of the COVID-19 pandemic.”

“It is a great honour for me to be invited to this important gathering. The signing of the MoUs is a major milestone for us to begin working together towards the prosperity of both our countries. We need to expeditiously come up with initiatives that propel the growth of our industries and trade. I strongly believe that through cooperation we can grow domestic industries and subsequently increase investments and trade in both countries,” said Hon. Frederick Shava, Zimbabwe’s Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

The Rwanda Development Board Deputy Chief Executive Officer Zephania Niyonkuru added: “The Government of Rwanda works very closely with Zimbabwe on a range of opportunities that are mutually beneficial for both our countries. These areas include trade and investments, infrastructure, energy, civil aviation among others. Rwanda and Zimbabwe share a deep commitment to excellence – and I believe these are the values that have served our working relationship in the past as they will in the future. Through our partnership and current engagements, bilateral trade could grow to desirable levels between the two countries.”

Speaking on behalf of Rwanda’s private sector, Robert Bapfakurera, the PSF Chairperson said: “This conference is an opportunity for businesses to see how they can scale their activities in both countries and explore areas where we can share knowledge and skills for growth.”

Over the last two years (2019 – 2020) Zimbabwe exported goods worth US\$ 15.9 million to Rwanda, while exports from Rwanda to Zimbabwe were estimated at US\$ 113,607.

The Rwanda Development Board (RDB) is a government agency in Rwanda with a vision to transform Rwanda into a dynamic global hub for business, investment, and innovation. Its mission is to fast-track economic development in Rwanda by enabling private sector growth.