



MUFUKA & ASSOCIATES  
Legal Practitioners

# Weekly NewsFlash

Friday, 13th of March 2026

## Zimbabwe to the World: Navigating the New Frontier of International Trade

In an era where the “global village” is no longer a metaphor but a marketplace, the flow of capital and goods has become the lifeblood of national growth. For Zimbabwe, this shift is marked by two powerful trends: a vibrant diaspora “looking inward” to seed their homeland with fresh investment, and local entrepreneurs “looking outward” to scale their portfolios across borders. International trade is not merely the exchange of goods; it is the strategic movement of value across legal and geographical boundaries. As we stand at the threshold of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), the journey from a local startup to a global player must begin on Day One.

### The “Breadbasket” Legacy: Contextualizing Our Potential

Zimbabwe was historically dubbed the “Breadbasket of Africa” due to its highly sophisticated agricultural systems, fertile soils, and unique climatic conditions that allowed for a diverse range of crops. While the term is often used nostalgically, the economic reality is re-emerging:

- **The Power of Output:** In 2024/2025, Zimbabwe achieved significant wheat surpluses and record-breaking tobacco outputs (exceeding 290 million kg).
- **Capacity & Market:** With a population of over 16.6 million and a growing focus on increasing disposable income through value-addition, Zimbabwe is no longer just a “small market.” We are a strategic hub within a continent of 1.3 billion people and a combined GDP of \$3.4 trillion under AfCFTA.

### Spotlight: The Creative Industries

The “Orange Economy” is one of Zimbabwe’s most lucrative yet under-tapped sectors. According to recent WIPO and UNCTAD 2024/2025 reports, Zimbabwe ranks strongly in “Creative Outputs” (95th globally), outperforming many of its peers in innovation-to-input ratios. Our creatives—from film producers to fashion designers—are the new international traders.

### The 5-Point Check-Mark for Global Creatives

If you are a creative looking to trade your intellectual property or products internationally, you must verify:

1. **IP Protection:** Are your trademarks, copyrights, or patents registered locally (ARIPO) and internationally?
2. **Export Readiness:** Do you have a CD1 Form (Exchange Control) and are you registered with ZimTrade?
3. **Digital Compliance:** For those selling digital services, do your contracts align with the AfCFTA Protocol on Digital Trade regarding cross-border data flows?
4. **Tax Residency:** Have you cleared your status with ZIMRA to avoid double taxation on international royalties?
5. **Quality Standards:** Does your creative product meet the technical barriers to trade (TBT) in your target market (e.g., EU labeling or SABS standards)?

### The Young Farmer’s Path to Export

For the young “A1” or “A2” farmer, international trade doesn’t start at the harvest; it starts at the furrow. To clear the path for future investment, focus on these immediate “system” requirements:

- **Traceability:** Modern international buyers require “farm-to-fork” tracking. Start keeping meticulous records of seed sources and chemical usage.
- **Certification:** Align your operations with GlobalG.A.P. or organic certifications early. Without these, the “Global” in global trade remains out of reach.
- **The AfCFTA Advantage:** Under the new continental agreement, Zimbabwe’s agricultural specialists must pay attention to Rules of Origin. To benefit from duty-free trade within Africa, your product must be “wholly obtained” or sufficiently transformed within Zimbabwe.

### Where Does the Journey Start?

International trade is often imagined as a destination reached only after outgrowing “the local.” In reality, the systems you set up today—your corporate governance, your legal compliance, and your financial transparency—determine your capacity to receive investment tomorrow.

Investment and trade are two sides of the same coin: Investment builds the capacity to produce, and Trade provides the market to realize that value.

**The Bottom Line:** Zimbabwe’s history as a breadbasket was built on systems. Our future as a global trade hub will be built on the same. Whether you are a creator in Harare or a grower in Mazowe, the globe is your market—but only if your foundation is world-class.

In our next newsflash, we will dive deeper into the “Investment” arm—covering capital flight, diaspora bonds, and the legal protections for foreign direct investment in Zimbabwe.

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