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Mugabe should declare assets first

September 23, 2015 in [Opinion & Editorials](#)



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PRESIDENT Robert Mugabe's call for Members of Parliament and senior government officials to publicly declare their assets hit the nail on the head, but he should lead by example and be the first to proclaim his chattels.



Hence, the challenge to Mugabe by African Parliamentary Network against Corruption chairperson Willas Madzimore is in the right direction especially if the President is to show sincerity in fighting graft among top officials in his Zanu PF party.

Mugabe, during the official opening of the Third Session of the Eighth Parliament, stated that high-level public office holders should disclose their assets upon assumption of office as part of efforts to fight the

scourge of corruption which continues to rear its ugly head at all levels of society.

Public officials, including Cabinet ministers, senior government officials and Zanu PF stalwarts, have become rich overnight despite the fact that some earn meagre salaries, as low as \$400 per month.



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Some Cabinet ministers joined government with literally nothing in terms of assets, but are now the richest people in society, owning multi-million-dollar properties and businesses, including banks.

This inexplicable accumulation of wealth has raised eyebrows and attracted the attention of civic groups and opposition political parties, who have for decades urged Mugabe and Parliamentarians to state their assets.

Sadly, such calls have fallen on deaf ears, as many public officials continue to fleece the State of billions of dollars worth of resources through corruption with no action taken against them due to the perverse culture of impunity in the ruling Zanu PF. It is, therefore, quite a surprise that Mugabe appears to have seen sense in officials disclosing their assets upon assumption of public office.

We, therefore, fully support Madzimore's call on Mugabe to lead by example and declare his own assets, which have been the subject of speculation, with media reports claiming he had become one of Africa's richest presidents and billionaires.

Declaration of assets is the norm in most progressive societies. There is nothing Western about it, as some in Zanu PF might try to argue. So it was not surprising when new Nigerian leader Muhammadu Buhari and his deputy recently declared their assets. And so did new Namibian President Hage Geingob and First Lady Monica.

We believe the Zanu PF government must walk the talk and ensure that corruption is dealt with otherwise efforts to revive the comatose economy will remain a pipe dream. Zimbabweans will, therefore, anxiously wait for Mugabe and his Cabinet to take the first steps in declaring their assets.

We also hope that the second step would be for Mugabe again to launch investigations into the lifestyles of public officials. All Cabinet ministers and officials who are suspected to have corruptly amassed wealth must be reconnoitered and brought to book otherwise Mugabe's calls will be nothing but rhetoric.

The ball is, therefore, in Mugabe's court. He must force his ministers to declare their assets and arrest all those found to be corrupt otherwise talk about ending the vice will remain nothing but hot air.



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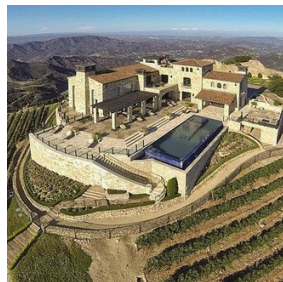
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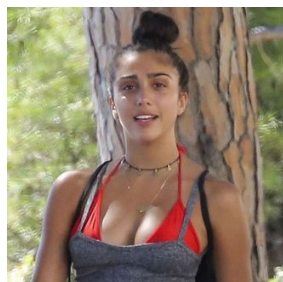
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