



## **PRESS STATEMENT**

*(For Immediate Release)*

### **UPDATE ON INCREASING WATER LEVELS AT KARIBA DAM**

**Lusaka, 8<sup>th</sup> April 2021** – The Zambezi River Authority (*the Authority*) hereby wishes to provide an update to the public regarding the water situation in the Kariba Catchment and lake levels at Kariba dam. This update is a follow up to that of 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021.

#### ***Lake Levels Recorded at Kariba Dam***

The Lake levels at Kariba have continued rising steadily due to increased inflows into Lake Kariba coming in from the Kariba upper and lower catchment. From the last update provided on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021, the lake levels increased by a total of 1.21 meters, increasing from the level of 480.76m recorded on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021 and with an associated live storage of 24.30 BCM, to a lake level of 481.97 meters with a live storage of 30.30 BCM recorded on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2021. This represents a 25% increase in live storage (usable water) over a period of 37 days.

The lake level recorded on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2021 of 481.97 meters has placed the lake level at 6.47 meters above the Minimum Operating Level (MOL) of 475.50m. This places the lake water levels at 6.53 meters below the full supply level of 488.50 meters.

Last year on the same date (7<sup>th</sup> April 2020), the Lake level was lower at 478.25m with 12.40 BCM of usable water or 19.17% live storage. This had placed the lake water levels at only 2.7m above the Minimum Operating Level of 475.5m and 10.25m below the full supply level of 488.50m.

#### ***Water Allocation for Power Generation at Kariba Dam***

The Authority has maintained the 30 BCM of water allocated for power generation operations at Kariba for the year 2021, shared equally between the two power stations. A review of the hydrological outlook is scheduled to be undertaken by the end of the second quarter of 2021 that will inform on any adjustments to this water allocation.

#### ***Performance of the 2020/2021 Rainfall Season to date***

In line with the seasonal forecast released by the Twenty-Fourth Annual Southern Africa Regional Climate Outlook Forum (SARCOF-24) in August 2020, the bulk of the SADC region in general and the Kariba Catchment in particular, has received normal to above-normal rainfall during the first quarter of 2021. Accordingly, the Zambezi

River flows as monitored at the Authority's Key River Flows Gauging Stations are as follows:

### ***Zambezi River Flows as Monitored at Chavuma Gauging Station***

During the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March 2021 update on water levels, the flows at Chavuma were notably declining. The good news, however, is that as per hydrological cycle for the station, the flows have increased thus closing the period under review at Three thousand, three hundred and ninety-six cubic meters per second (3,396m<sup>3</sup>/s). This translates into an increase of 1,104m<sup>3</sup>/s from the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March 2021 recorded flow of 2,292m<sup>3</sup>/s. On the same date last year, the flows were higher at 5,803m<sup>3</sup>/s.

The peak in flows during this time of the year is historical and is a normal hydrological cycle for the gauging station whereby two peaks are recorded twice in any given season; starting with one during the first quarter and the second in the second quarter of the year.

### ***Zambezi River Flows as Monitored at Victoria Falls Gauging Station***

The Zambezi River flows recorded at Victoria Falls gauging station are now receding following the first peak in flows of early March 2021. On April 7, 2021, the recorded flow at Victoria Falls flows was 3,231 m<sup>3</sup>/s which is lower than the 3,890m<sup>3</sup>/s flow recorded on the same date last year. However, as per historical hydrological cycle, the station is expected to record a second peak in flows in May 2021.

In line with our mandate, the Authority remains committed to its work of prudently managing the Kariba Dam and will continue to monitor the hydrological outlook of the Kariba Catchment and make necessary adjustments in the reservoir operations to ensure continued availability of water for power generation operations at Kariba Dam.

*The Zambezi River Authority (the Authority) is a Bi-National organization mandated to contribute to the economic, industrial and social development of the Republics of Zambia and Zimbabwe by obtaining the greatest possible benefits from the natural advantages offered by the waters of the Zambezi River (between Zambia and Zimbabwe) through the most economical and effective means of providing water for generation of electricity and for other purposes which the Contracting States may decide upon.*



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