

## AFRICA RISK CONSULTING

### Zimbabwe Monthly Briefing December 2025

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#### Zimbabwe Summary 10 December 2025

*Zimbabwe's ruling party, ZANU-PF, formally signals its intention to amend the national Constitution to extend President Emmerson Mnangagwa's (2017-present) term in office beyond the current two-term limit, targeting 2030. Finance minister Mthuli Ncube proposes hiking royalties on gold producers as the country seeks to capitalise on recent record-high global bullion prices, but the industry has reacted strongly to the proposal. Australia-headquartered Invictus Energy Limited confirms it is in advanced negotiations with Qatar's Al Mansour Holdings (AMH) over a possible agreement that could see AMH take a 50% stake in the company and substantially deepen AMH's involvement in Invictus and in its Cabora Bassa Basin gas project.*

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#### ZANU-PF moves to extend Mnangagwa's tenure as succession battle flares

Zimbabwe's ruling party, ZANU-PF, has [formally](#) signalled its intention to amend the constitution to extend President **Emmerson Mnangagwa's** (2017-present) term in office beyond the 2028 two-term limit, targeting 2030. This intention was revealed in court papers ZANU-PF national political commissioner **Munyaradzi Machacha** filed in opposition to a constitutional court application the local pressure group **Ibhetshu Likazulu** filed to prevent any attempt to amend the constitution. Ibhetshu Likazulu's leader, **Mbuso Fuzwayo**, argues in the application that any attempt to amend the Constitution to prolong Mnangagwa's stay in power is unlawful.

Machacha's counterapplication [argue](#) that such an amendment does not require a national referendum as altering the length of a presidential term is legally distinct from altering the number of terms a president may serve. According to Machacha, such an amendment, modifying term-length provisions, can be affected via parliamentary procedure under Sections 328 and 131 of the constitution. The process involves a 90-day **Government Gazette** notice, public hearings and submissions, and a two-thirds majority in both houses of **Parliament** before presidential assent.

Critics of the move, including constitutional experts and civil-society activists, have [raised](#) grave concerns, arguing that even if the amendment affects term length rather than term count, the real effect is to give the incumbent more time in office, amounting to an effective third term, something the constitution was designed to prevent. One key argument centres on Section 328 (7), which explicitly bars an incumbent from benefiting from amendments to term-limit provisions, with critics [saying](#) any attempt to extend Mnangagwa's stay beyond 2028 would violate the spirit, if not the letter, of that provision. Critics further warn that success for the 2030 agenda could set a dangerous precedent as political majorities could in the future routinely bend the constitution to extend the time in power, undermining the principle of constitutional term limits and jeopardising democratic governance.

The move comes amid deepening succession politics within ZANU-PF, with some senior figures backing an extended presidency while others are advocating for a transition of power, a dynamic that has reignited long-standing tensions over who will lead the party and the country after the next election, scheduled for 2028. If ZANU-PF succeeds in amending the constitution, the move could reshape Zimbabwe's democratic landscape and signal a new era of

constitutional tampering. The constitutional court is still set to rule on the above, but the outcome will also tell a lot about the independence and competence of Zimbabwe's judiciary.

### Government doubles gold royalty, sparking industry backlash

Finance minister **Mthuli Ncube** presented the 2026 national budget speech on 27 November, introducing a series of revenue measures aimed at boosting state income and supporting local industry, the most notable of which was a proposal to hike royalties on gold producers. The country is seeking to capitalise on recent record-high global gold prices, but the industry has reacted strongly to the proposal, setting a potential clash between the two sides.

Ncube [proposed](#) a new sliding scale for gold royalties, just one of multiple taxes that miners pay to the government. The proposal would see, at current global prices, gold miners paying 10% of their gold earnings to the government, up from 5%, marking one of the highest royalty rates in **Africa**. Under the new scale, the lower band (3%) remains for prices below \$1,200/oz, a middle band (5%) applies between \$1,201–2,500/oz, and the 10% rate kicks in above \$2,501/oz. As world gold has spent much of 2025 trading well above those thresholds, **Chamber of Mines** CEO **Isaac Kwesu** [warned](#) that the change would effectively lift the tax burden on most producers immediately, trimming margins, reducing cash generation, and leaving Zimbabwe even less competitive for new investment.

The reaction from mining companies and representative bodies was also swift. **Jersey**-based **Caledonia Mining**, operator of the **Blanket Mine** and planning to build Zimbabwe's biggest gold mines at **Bilboes**, [issued](#) a public statement saying the proposed top-tier royalty and related fiscal tweaks would reduce profitability and cash generation, prompting the company to reassess project economics for new developments. Artisanal and small-scale miners, organised under the **Zimbabwe Miners Federation (ZMF)**, [urged](#) the government to reconsider, warning that the higher levy would deter formal investment and drive a fresh surge in smuggling, an argument grounded in the reality that informal channels currently account for a substantial share of national output.

The ZMF told the finance ministry that the hikes could push miners to seek better returns across the border, undermining the very revenue the policy seeks to increase. However, speaking to business leaders on 8 December at a post-budget seminar in response to the industry reaction, Ncube [said](#) he was willing to adjust proposed gold royalty changes after the warning by miners.

While the budget speech proposed tax hikes, it was not purely punitive as it also proposed measures meant to modernise the gold market and draw the metal back into the formal economy. The speech proposes expanding who may legally possess and trade certified refined gold bars, authorising refiners, registered dealers, and individual holders to own, pledge, or sell certified bars under regulated conditions. Proponents argue that this liberalisation could reduce smuggling by creating legitimate domestic channels for monetising gold.

Beyond mining, the 2026 Budget sets the tone for the implementation of Zimbabwe's second five-year **National Development Strategy (NDS2)**. It targets macro stability and modest growth while prioritising social services and infrastructure. The speech [projects](#) 5% growth in 2026 and aims for a near-balanced budget while using gold and diaspora inflows to shore up foreign exchange.

### Invictus Energy in advanced talks with Qatari investor over potential 50% stake

**Australia**-headquartered **Invictus Energy Limited**, [has](#) confirmed it is in advanced negotiations with **Qatar's Al Mansour Holdings (AMH)** over a possible agreement that could

see the AMH take a 50% stake in the company and substantially deepen AMH's involvement in Invictus and in its **Cabora Bassa Basin** gas project in northern Zimbabwe.

The potential advancement follows a landmark strategic transaction announced on 27 August, in which AMH [agreed](#) to acquire a 19.9% equity stake in Invictus in a placement worth A\$37.8m (\$25.3m) and committed up to \$500m in conditional funding to advance the Cabora Bassa project through to commercial production. That earlier agreement also included the creation of a joint venture, **Al Mansour Oil & Gas (AMOG)**, to target upstream assets across Africa.

If a 50% ownership outcome were to be finalised, it would [represent](#) a dramatic increase in AMH's influence compared with the 19.9% starting point and the joint-venture relationship envisaged in August. The shift would likely accelerate project development timelines by unlocking larger capital resources and regional project support, but market observers also note it would raise new governance and strategic questions about control and the role of Invictus' existing shareholders.

For Zimbabwe, the AMH-Invictus relationship represents potential large-scale foreign private capital being directed at a domestic energy project. Both government and industry stakeholders have repeatedly signalled eagerness to see the Cabora Bassa discovery progress toward production, citing the benefits for power generation, industrial supply and export revenues, all of which stand to be influenced by the final structure of any expanded AMH investment.

At this stage, the negotiations remain subject to completion of due diligence, formal documentation, and the approvals required under corporate and regulatory frameworks. Nevertheless, the market is already responding positively with Invictus' shares more than [doubling](#) in price to their highest level since December 2023 after the announcement, valuing the company at A\$208m (\$139.3m).

Seismic survey [data](#) covering the eastern Cabora Bassa has identified eight high-potential prospects totalling an estimated 2.9 trillion cubic feet of gas and 184 million barrels of condensate.

## 2026 outlook

Heading into 2026, succession battles within the ZANU-PF are likely to escalate. Tensions not only with civil society, but also within the party, will be exacerbated by the party signalling its intention to amend the constitution. The government will be also focusing on rolling out the latest National Development Strategy (NDS2). The plan intends to build in gains from the prior development plan, such as stable strong GDP growth, increase in foreign currency reserves, a stable exchange rate, the introduction of the ZIG, growth in the agriculture and mining sectors. Government is also expected to provide direction for the adoption of a single currency, with signals from the financing ministry this year hinting at the removal of the 2030 deadline for total conversion to sole use of local currency.

## Planner

Dec 2025 **Harare (Zimbabwe) Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ)** (central bank) **Monetary Policy Committee (MPC)** decision

20 Dec 2025 **Bulawayo (Zimbabwe) Nkulumane Constituency** by-election

9-12 Feb 2026 **Cape Town (South Africa)** Mining Indaba 2026

Jul 2026 **Harare (Zimbabwe)** 2026 National budget Midterm review

28 May 2027 **(South Africa)** Expiry of special residence permits for Zimbabweans living in South Africa

## Chronology

9 Dec 2025 **Harare (Zimbabwe)** *Zimlive*. **Triangle Limited Zimbabwe**, a unit of **South Africa**-based sugar producer **Tongaat Hulett**, moves to contain a major environmental incident after a section of its stillage handling ponds failed on 27 November, releasing an estimated 16 megalitres of waste liquid into nearby rivers;

8 Dec 2025 **Harare (Zimbabwe)** *Newsday*. President **Emmerson Mnangagwa** removes mines minister **Winston Chitando** from his cabinet post and appoints his deputy, **Polite Kambamura**, as his replacement;

8 Dec 2025 **Harare (Zimbabwe)** *Herald*. The ruling **Zanu-PF** party officially launch its campaign for the 20 December **Nkulumane Constituency** by-election, where the party's candidate is **Freedom Murechu**;

8 Dec 2025 **Harare (Zimbabwe)** *Zimbabwe Mail*. Sector figures indicate that Zimbabweans are now withdrawing an estimated \$346m per month from ATMs, a sharp rise from around \$260m at the beginning of the year;

5 Dec 2025 **Stockholm (Sweden)** *Reuters*. **Sweden** announces that it will phase out development aid in the coming years to **Zimbabwe** along with **Tanzania**, **Mozambique**, **Liberia** and **Bolivia** and use the money to increase support for **Ukraine**;

5 Dec 2025 **Harare (Zimbabwe)** *Zimbabwe Mail*. A policy document reveals Zimbabwe is planning a significant transformation of its rail system programme under a \$3 billion development and upgrade programme during the **National Development Strategy 2 (NDS2)** period, covering 2026 to 2030;

1 Dec 2025 **Harare (Zimbabwe)** *Zimbabwe Mail*. Zimbabwe and **Spain's** governments urge the **United Kingdom's (UK)** supreme court to overturn a decision that upheld the registration and enforcement of two major international arbitration awards, arguing that the previous rulings improperly stripped them of sovereign immunity;

30 Nov 2025 **Harare (Zimbabwe)** *Zimbabwe Mail*. Finance minister **Mthuli Ncube** proposes amendments to Zimbabwe's rental income tax legislation, aiming to close loopholes that allow business activities in commercial and non-commercial properties to escape the tax net;

29 Nov 2025 **Harare (Zimbabwe)** *Newswire*. The **Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries (CZI)**, the country's biggest business group, says incentives granted to new foreign investors are shutting out local companies that have been pouring money into expansion, but without enjoying the same perks;

28 Nov 2025 **Harare (Zimbabwe)** *Newsday*. Finance minister **Mthuli Ncube** says government is targeting to raise annual investments to above 13.1% of GDP, translating to \$6.86 billion per year, under the newly released **National Development Strategy 2 (NDS2)**, which covers the period 2026 to 2030;

27 Nov 2025 **Harare (Zimbabwe)** *Bloomberg*. The **National Development Strategy 2 (NDS2)** reveals that Zimbabwe does not intend to completely wean itself off utilising the **United States (US)** dollar, even as it moves toward adopting the ZiG as its primary currency by 2030;

25 Nov 2025 **Harare (Zimbabwe)** *Herald*. Digital tobacco platform **Modernleaf AI** win of the innovation award at the **World Tobacco Conference in Dubai (United Arab Emirates)** highlights global and national recognition for the shift in Zimbabwe's tobacco sector from traditional farming to technology-driven production;

25 Nov 2025 **Harare (Zimbabwe)** *Newswire*. Jersey-based **Caledonia Mining** approves construction of the **Bilboes Mine**, after a feasibility study projected strong returns for what would be Zimbabwe's biggest gold mine, with the company starting the process to raise part of the \$484m needed for the project;

24 Nov 2025 **Harare (Zimbabwe)** *Herald*. Chinese ambassador **Zhou Ding**, speaking at the **2025 Mining Media Awards** in Harare, praises the strong growth of **China-Zimbabwe** relations;

24 Nov 2025 **Harare (Zimbabwe)** *Herald*. President **Emmerson Mnangagwa** attends the seventh **African Union (AU)–European Union (EU) Summit** in **Angola**, where leaders discuss strengthening cooperation on peace, security, governance, trade and sustainable development;

20 Nov 2025 **Harare (Zimbabwe)** *Newswire*. State-owned mining company, **Kuvimba Mining House** and Chinese firms, **Zhejiang Huayou Cobalt** and **Tsingshan Holding Group**, start work on a feasibility study that is a precursor to raising as much as \$300m to develop a new **Sandawana** lithium plant;

19 Nov 2025 **Harare (Zimbabwe)** *Herald*. Zimbabwean and **Mozambican** businesses will meet at the **Mozambique–Zimbabwe Business Forum** in **Maputo** (Mozambique) on 22 November to explore new partnerships and expand existing ones, focusing on trade, investment and tourism;

19 Nov 2025 **Harare (Zimbabwe)** *Bloomberg*. Zimbabwe's dollar-only stock exchange, the **Victoria Falls Stock Exchange (VFX)**, is seen overtaking its 131-year-old counterpart, the **Zimbabwe Stock Exchange (ZSE)**, to become the nation's largest by market value within two years;

### About Africa Risk Consulting:

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Please contact us by email [info@africariskconsulting.com](mailto:info@africariskconsulting.com)

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