**Cuba-Zimbabwe Parliamentary Friendship Group officially launched**

On the morning of February 15, the National Assembly Speaker, Honorable Jacob Mudenda, officially launched the Zimbabwe - Cuba Parliamentary Forum at the seat of the Zimbabwean Parliament in an event presided over by Cuban Ambassador Elio Savón Oliva and the President of the Senate, Hon. Edna Madzongwe and attended by Deputy Foreign Minister Edgar Mbwebwe.

Mr. Mudenda, in his speech, emphasized the historical ties between the two countries and how Cuba has contributed to the development of Zimbabwe with the graduation of more than 3000 Zimbabweans in different subjects, emphasizing education, a line in which the African country has one of the continent's highest literacy rates.

For his part, the Cuban Ambassador recalled the similarities between the two developing countries, being limited by economic sanctions and a strong blockade by the US that in the case of Cuba has lasted more than 55 years. Finally he took the mark to clarify that the blockade is still maintained.

Speeches by Ms. Madzongwe and Mr. Chen Chimutengwende, Chairperson of the Forum and Patron of the Zimbabwe - Cuba Friendship Association (ZICUFA), said that the creation of this parliamentary group could be another framework for demanding an end to the sanctions Imposed on Zimbabwe and the unjust blockade of Cuba.

The establishment of this Parliamentary Forum gives continuity to a long period of strong diplomatic relations between Cuba and Zimbabwe. In the future, a similar group should be created in the Cuban National Assembly.

**(Cubaminrex-Embacuba Zimbabwe)**