

## Zimbabwe's boozy Cop26 party doesn't go down well at home

Written by Administrator  
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Benjamin Cooke 02/11/2021

While Boris Johnson struck a sombre note at the beginning of [Cop26](#) , saying the world is “one minute to midnight”, the Zimbabwean visitors to the conference were having a jollier time.

The country's information minister, Nick Mangwana, posted a picture on Twitter of two men buying two trolleys of whisky, beer and crisps — supplies for a party to welcome the Zimbabwean president Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa to Britain. Two crates of Budweiser, six bottles of Glenfiddich, six bottles of Johnnie Walker and three bottles of Jamieson were among the haul.

“Tonight [Sunday] there is a massive welcome party held in honour of president Emmerson Mnangagwa,” Mangwana tweeted. “Glasgow is the place to be as Zimbabweans from all corners of the UK attend this shindig and welcome the president. The party will spill over to the streets tomorrow.”

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Mangwana also shared a video of the men exiting Costco in Glasgow with the alcohol. One of the men said: "Cop26 we are ready." In a second video shared by Mangwana, revellers wearing scarfs the colours of the Zimbabwean flag can be seen dancing on a beach.

Mangwana claimed that no delegates were involved in the party, and that it was arranged by Zimbabweans living in the UK. Yet his promotion of the party provoked the ire of fellow Zimbabweans.

Jessie Pineau, the Zimbabwean environmentalist and social activist, called it "extremely embarrassing", while Pedzisai Ruhanya, the former news editor of the Zimbabwean independent paper *Daily News*, tweeted: "While millions wallow in a sea of poverty in Zimbabwe, varakashi [a slang term for the president's supporters] enjoy whisky in Scotland. Rest assured they will be drunk and won't know anything happening at the conference; it's a boozing trip."

In 2020 the average Zimbabwean weekly wage was £15.90, less than half the price of a 70cl bottle of Glenfiddich 12-year-old single malt. The Zimbabwean economy [has been battered by high rates of inflation](#)

On July 29 Mthuli Ncube, the country's finance and economic development minister, announced that the year-on-year inflation rate stood at 56.37 per cent.

[President Mnangagwa](#)'s arrival in Scotland on Sunday evening was the first visit by a

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Zimbabwean head of state to Britain since Robert Mugabe met with Tony Blair in Edinburgh in 1997.

He took office in November 2017 after the resignation of Mugabe who, having been president since 1987, resigned as protests against him spread throughout Zimbabwe. The protests had begun when Mugabe sacked Mnangagwa as deputy prime minister.

Known as the "crocodile" for his political cunning, Mnangagwa is known to have a taste for whisky. He fought in Zimbabwe's war of independence in the 1960s and 1970s before taking charge of the country's Central Intelligence Organisation as the country descended into civil war in the 1980s.

Zimbabwe has strengthened its climate commitments in advance of Cop26, pledging that its emissions in 2030 will be 40 per cent lower than they would be in a "business as usual" scenario. Nevertheless, this pledge would still see the country's carbon emissions rise from 35.8 megatonnes in 2017 to 44.7 megatonnes in 2030.