

Zimbabwe hikes mobile phone licence fees

Zimbabwe on Thursday, 30 May 2013, raised by nearly 40% the licence fees for mobile telecommunication operators to \$137.5 million from \$100 million.

The fees are valid for 20 years.

"The licence fees for the renewal of the mobile licence has been set at \$137.5 million for a 20 year tenure," said Nicholas Goche, the Transport, Communications and Infrastructure Development Minister.

Current fees were last set 15 years ago and the minister said "in reviewing the tariff, we came to the conclusion that this was the most appropriate tariff."

Zimbabwe has three mobile operators Econet Wireless, Telecel and the government owned NetOne which have total subscriber base of 12.6 million. Zimbabwe's population stood at 12.9 million at the last census in 2012.

Finance Minister Tendai Biti this week said the telecommunications sector is one of the fastest growing industries in the southern African country.

Biti earlier this year hinted that said the licensing revenue could be channelled to fund the cash-strapped country's elections.

Zimbabwe which is set to have elections this year has been battling to secure money to cover its election budget of \$132 million.

Source: AFP