

Zim government moves to protect telecoms customers

By [Dumisani Ndlela](#)

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Zimbabwe's telecommunication operators have been told to start reducing tariffs to avoid "milking" customers.

This was revealed by Minister of Information and Communication Technology Nelson Chamisa who said he had instructed that telecommunication charges "need to be on the average of the region."

The Postal and Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe (POTRAZ) has already moved to comply with the policy decision. In a notice published Thursday, 16 July 2009, POTRAZ said acting in the public interest and in response to a public outcry over unaffordable voice telephony tariffs, it had reviewed maximum tariff levels with effect from 1 July 2009.

The review, which saw tariffs fall by between 10% and 15%, struck a balance between "affordability of services to consumers and the viability of operators", said POTRAZ.

Chamisa said these measures were short term interventions, indicating that government was planning to have the country under broadband for a sustainable reduction of tariffs.

To give local operators a chance to recover and expand government would not licence new players in the country, he said. However, this policy could be reviewed in the interest of the public, Chamisa said.

ABOUT DUMISANI NDLELA

Dumisani Ndlela is a Zimbabwean journalist specialising in business and financial reporting, with experience reporting on commodities, stock and financial markets, advertising, marketing and the media. He has previously reported from a number of regional countries as well as from the UK and Germany on commodities and regional integration. He can be contacted on dndlela@yahoo.co.uk.

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