Zimbabwe's Mugabe hails separation of conjoined twins

July 10 2014

Zimbabwe surgeons have successfully separated conjoined twin babies, a first for the country's down-at-heel health service and an achievement that has been hailed by President Robert Mugabe.

"The surgery went very well," surgeon Bothwell Mbuwayesango who lead the team of 50 medical personnel told AFP. "The babies are fine and are doing very well."

The twin two month-old babies who were joined from the chest to the upper abdomen and shared a liver.

They were separated in an eight-hour operation at a state hospital in the capital Harare last week.

Surgical separations have been carried out for decades elsewhere, but with Zimbabwe's state hospitals widely criticised for lacking vital equipment and drugs, politicians have jumped on this achievement.

President Robert Mugabe visited the twins and congratulated the all-local medical team who operated the babies.

"I am overwhelmed," he said after visiting the babies. "I say to you congratulations. Congratulations to the entire team. You have done the nation proud. You have raised our name higher."

Mugabe who blames western sanctions for the country's woes including

the poor state of health facilities, said despite the embargo Zimbabwe has managed to perform such an operation.

"The suffering we have because of sanctions, but you can still perform wonders. The world will be talking about us, some will not believe because they do not want to believe," he said.

The European Unions and United States maintain that Mugabe and his wife remain on the sanctions list for rights abuses and electoral fraud.

© 2014 AFP