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PREFACE

The Institute has for the past three years worked extensively in Zimbabwe in cooperation with analysts, activists, church leaders, women's organizations and umbrella groups. Our objective is to build democracy in a society where civil and political liberties are progressively undermined by government, while those democratic gains that have been made over the past few years are being negated. This suggests the need to constantly rethink and develop new strategies in the struggle for democracy.

In 2004, the Institute's developed a close working relationship with a group of Zimbabwean academics and activists. The initial interaction and discussions were characterised by a candid exchange of views prompting, *inter alia*, suggestions that this group be regularly convened as a think tank under the leadership of Brian Raftopoulos. The think tank has had a growing impact, both as a unit and through its individual members, in the shaping of perceptions on Zimbabwe in partner organisations, the media and elsewhere. The insights and analyses that emanated from the group have been channelled into a series of publications on the continuing crisis in the country.

The first publication, *Zimbabwe: Injustice and Political Reconciliation* (Raftopoulos and Savage, eds.) was published by the Institute in 2004 and Weaver Press in Zimbabwe in 2005. The book addressed a range of issues integral to the development of reconciliation as a political and practical instrument of transition in Zimbabwe. The unique value of the book was that it provided a platform for Zimbabwean voices. This in turn, it is hoped, will serve both to inform external players and to create space for democratic discussions within Zimbabwe on ways of taking the nation forward.

The second publication, *The Struggle for Legitimacy: A Long-Term Analysis of the 2005 Parliamentary Election and its Implications for Democratic Processes in Zimbabwe*, included analyses of certain key areas in relation to the political situation in Zimbabwe, namely the media, the role of the military and the gendered implications of the election process.

The close of 2005 then saw the think tank working towards the publication of a text examining 'lessons learned' and the future of democratic politics in Zimbabwe. The report, *The Future of Democratic Politics in Zimbabwe*, contains chapters that focus on what has happened since 2000 in a variety of sectors within the country. In looking at each area, the members of the think-tank were guided by three basic questions:

1. How has the sector performed over the last five years/decade, that is – how has it interacted/dealt with the authoritarianism of the state?
2. What have been the strong points, weaknesses and limitations of the above approach?
3. What challenges face the sector in moving forwards? How are they looking to meet these challenges, if at all, and what strategies could they look to use?

The aim was to establish the situation now, before looking at ideal scenarios for each sector's operation within a democratic dispensation and strategic options for moving the current situation towards resolution.

This publication, *Reflections on Democratic Politics in Zimbabwe,* is the fourth in the series. It is built from the analyses contained in the report on the future of democratic politics but provides a synthesis of the central issues alongside a detailed study of the main opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change. Our hope is that, through wide distribution of this accessible text, we can contribute to the continuing debate on the way forward for Zimbabwe.

In its creation of ideal-types – the ideal citizen, the 'true' Zimbabwean, the 'enemy' that is the West – the Zimbabwean state's authoritarianism attempts to eliminate imagination and in so doing, empathy. It has triumphed when citizens and groups can no longer remember or imagine alternative dispensations. This report is testimony to the fact that Zimbabweans, despite the devastating impact of the state's authoritarian hand, continue to seek out alternatives. In so doing, the authors illustrate a commitment to the knowledge that "freedom itself is never the end of the road - only the beginning" (Ignatieff, 1994: 107).

INTRODUCTION

Building opposition politics on the African continent has proven immensely difficult largely because of the oppressive nature of most post-colonial states and the extremely difficult structural conditions under which opposition forces have to mobilise and reproduce their support. In countries that have undergone an extensive liberation struggle, such as Zimbabwe in Southern Africa, the development of opposition politics presents specific challenges. In particular, the strong legacy of legitimacy enjoyed by former liberation movements and their capacity for revived nationalist mobilisation have presented opposition forces with immense obstacles in developing alternative programmatic positions. Moreover, the often-repressive nature of post-colonial states, compounding the longer repressive histories of colonial politics, has presented democratic forces with few precursors of alternative democratic forms. These obstacles must be set within the context of a global political environment that presents strong structural limits on the positioning of post neo-liberal alternatives. It is therefore not surprising that civic and opposition forces on the continent generally and in Southern Africa in particular have struggled to locate themselves firmly within the historical legacies and contemporary demands of their particular national contexts.

The Zimbabwean crisis has brought these problems into sharp focus largely because the crisis of the state and the economy has magnified these issues on a grand scale. Confronted with a strong former liberation movement, led by a leader with enormous prestige on the continent, civic and opposition forces have had to face the combined obstacles of an authoritarian nationalist state constructed through the legitimacy of the liberation struggle, in a rapidly shrinking economy that has comprehensively undermined the structural basis for the reproduction of broad social forces in the country. Moreover, in the short term, this scenario has not engendered a spirit of reform in the ruling party. Instead observers have witnessed the intensification of repressive rule and the continued marginalisation of opposition forces, with the military taking on an increasingly prominent role in all spheres of the state. Additionally, the growing repression of the state is centrally linked to the intense succession battle currently unfolding in Zimbabwe's ruling party, as the latter seeks to look at its future beyond its president, Robert Mugabe. This predicament has resulted in a more general malaise in the state where policy issues have become captive to internal struggles within ZANU PF. As Eldred Masunungure has written:

> The succession struggle is all consuming and here lies ZANU PF's single weakness at this juncture. Virtually everything in ZANU PF and Government is being interpreted in presidential succession terms. The policy dissonance arising from this debilitating struggle has become a big threat not only to ZANU PF but to the nation as a whole (2006: 5).

As the country slips deeper into economic crisis and international isolation, the opposition forces have to develop new non-violent ways to confront the regime. Thus far, as this report shows, the civic and opposition forces have

tried a range of strategies to oppose Zimbabwe's ruling party. These have included strikes, stay-aways, demonstrations, public meetings, regional and international lobbying, the use of both national and international legal instruments, censure from various international bodies, limited international sanctions, and pressure from the Zimbabwean Diaspora. These measures have, in different ways, caused problems for the regime, but neither singularly nor collectively have they been able to bring about political reform.

The continuing, though faltering capacity, of the Zimbabwean state to wield the instruments of coercion against opposition forces, and the central location of ruling party support within the armed forces and intelligence services, has led to a growing reliance of the Zimbabwean state on force for political survival. This process has engendered both fear and despondency within the Zimbabwean populace, and presented the democratic forces within the country with perilous terrain on which to mobilise support. As the independent media, labour unions, constitutional movement, women's movement, civic alliances, human rights organisations and churches have struggled to place democratic and human rights questions on the political agenda through peaceful means, the state has systematically closed down these spaces and asserted its right to exclusive control of the political agenda.

Notwithstanding the many setbacks that the democratic forces in Zimbabwe have experienced, the post-colonial civic movement in the country has had a remarkable history. Emerging as it did from under the wing of a dominant nationalist party, and for the first decade largely subsuming its activities to a complementary role, the civic forces developed, from the late 1980's and in particularly in the 1990's, into an autonomous and critical force, demanding the expansion of democratic spaces and greater state accountability. Moreover this movement introduced a more expansive and inclusive language of human and civic rights into the national political discourse - a language that had been marginalised in the dominant discursive practices of nationalist politics. These civic interventions have been critical to the process of expanding the political imaginaries of Zimbabwean politics, and notwithstanding the current setback in the civic and opposition movement, have introduced a framework of accountability that will not be easy for the state to erase and which will serve as an important resource for the revival of democratic politics in the country.

One of the major lessons learned in studying the development of democratic politics in Zimbabwe, is that alternative movements are necessarily built within particular national contexts and often these movements reproduce and assimilate aspects of the undemocratic cultures they are attempting to challenge and transform. As the paper on the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) shows this process has been all too apparent in the crisis that has debilitated this movement. Problems of accountability, violence and organisation have led to an uncomfortable similarity between the politics of the opposition and that of the ruling party. Part of the explanation for this disturbing trend has been that the repressive conditions under which the opposition has had to operate have necessitated a certain measure of commandism in opposition structures.

There is certainly some truth in this assertion. The crisis of responding at every turn to various forms of state harassment has proscribed the opportunities for more open forms of popular involvement. However, what is also apparent is that the political opposition has not expended sufficient organisational and intellectual resources to the development of alternative political modes of organisation and participation. The central focus on the capture of state power has diverted energies away from developing democratic forms of mobilisation, organisation and participation. Moreover the mode and language of expressing political differences have readily drawn on the political culture of the ruling party. These developments have been a major setback for the democratic struggle in Zimbabwe and will need to be more consciously addressed in repairing the damage resulting from the recent debacle in the MDC.

As we survey the terrain of political contestation it is very difficult to be sanguine about the options open to civic forces and opposition political parties. The spaces for peaceful democratic politics have been ruthlessly eliminated, and the state appears set to discourage any prospects for national political dialogue. Under these conditions the democratic forces will feel an increasing sense of frustration and strategic blockage, tempted to lock themselves into ritual calls for redundant strategies with little organisational capacity to deliver on such claims. In such circumstances, one of the ways forward is to stop and critically review the state and activities of the civic and opposition movement, and closely examine the balance of political forces determining the operating environment of such forces. It is hoped that this report and other publications produced in this series will assist in this process.

REFLECTIONS ON OPPOSITION POLITICS IN ZIMBABWE: THE POLITICS OF THE MOVEMENT FOR DEMOCRATIC CHANGE

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The dramatic schism and implosion in the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), Zimbabwe's main opposition party, in 2005/2006, has once again raised major questions about the future of opposition politics not only at a national level, but also on the continent. The MDC represented the hope of millions of Zimbabweans searching for a way out of the deep political and economic crisis that characterises contemporary Zimbabwe. For a short period the party pointed to the possibilities of creating an alternative, democratic non-violent, post-colonial politics, while confronting the enormous legacy and legitimacy of a former liberation movement and its enigmatic leader.

Founded on the basis of a strong civic movement, enunciating the need for both political and economic reforms, the MDC captured the growing disgruntlement of Zimbabwe's citizens over eroding economic conditions and the political arrogance of the ruling party. The energy of a younger generation of civic activists, no longer paralysed by the fear of confronting the 'party of liberation' and the ideological baggage that accompanied it, brought a vibrant energy into Zimbabwean politics, and expanded the subjunctive mood of the post-colonial milieu. The combination of the politics of constitutional reform and trade union activism provided a national organisational reach and an expansive discursive opportunity that radically challenged the increasingly moribund exclusivity of ZANU PF's nationalism. The politics of possibility dominated the discussions of thousands of activists around the country, and the sense of imminent victory, often of Panglossian dimensions, was everywhere apparent. The huge weight of a political monolith appeared to be lifting, and opportunities to pose new questions not only about the present and future, but also about the legacies of the past, began to appear.

For some analysts the emergence of this opposition was merely an 'anti-Mugabe reaction', a counter to the glaring shortcomings of the ruling party. In short, it represented no positive alternatives. One response to this accusation is that all opposition movements begin in such ways. However, the MDC also generated the release of new energies and possibilities and the construction of a novel democratic discourse in the Zimbabwean context. The ruling party and its intellectuals have been loath to admit this, because in the discursive world of Zimbabwe's liberation politics the politics of freedom can only emanate from the former liberation movement. This form of ideological closure has been a central part of the authoritarian politics that has marked the most recent period of Zimbabwe's politics (Hammar, Raftopoulos and Jense, 2003; Raftopoulos and Savage, 2004; Ranger, 2004). Despite the repressive response of the state to these challenges such questions continue to be asked.

Notwithstanding the possibilities and hopes that the emergence of the MDC created, the opposition has also been marked by very serious shortcomings that have reflected, both the ways in which dissenting politics often take on aspects of the political culture they seek to displace, and the organisational and imaginative limits of the MDC challenge. These are the issues that this paper will attempt to explore, as well as to point to some of the challenges that are likely to confront any future opposition initiative in Zimbabwe. However, before tackling these central concerns the paper will first provide a brief historical context to the emergence of the MDC.

HISTORICAL TRENDS IN NATIONALIST AND OPPOSITION POLITICS

Several studies of African opposition politics in Zimbabwe during both the colonial and post-colonial periods stress the importance of a triple legacy in undermining the growth of a democratic tradition. This legacy includes the influence of 'traditional', subject politics (Mamdani, 1996), the authoritarian structures of colonial rule and the commandist politics of the liberation struggle with its attendant view that only liberation parties can represent the 'will of the people' for the foreseeable future (Sithole, 1997; Moyo, 1993; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2004; Masunungure, 2004). Thus, while nationalism provided a contingent discursive unity, usually marked by tensions and cleavages, this mobilisational force also carried with it a series of unpropitious tendencies undermining future democratic politics.

During the colonial period nationalist politics was often characterised by violent ruptures both between and within nationalist parties. The 1963 split between Zapu and its splinter organisation Zanu, was marked by a series of violent clashes and mutual demonisation that continued until the formation of the Patriotic Front on the eve of the 1979 Lancaster House Conference. The rivalry between the two parties continued in the aftermath of the post-1980 settlement, punctuated by the Gukurahundi violence of the new state in Matabeleland and the Midlands in the mid-1980's. This massive deployment of state violence effectively led to the formal subsumption of PF Zapu to the ruling ZANU PF in the form of the 1987 Unity Accord, and thus the demise of a formidable opposition party. Within the nationalist parties themselves, a number of violent power struggles occurred in both Zanu and Zapu in the 1970's that consolidated the leadership of the 'old guard' (Moore, 1991), setting the precedent for the violent marginalisation of dissenting voices within nationalist politics.[1]

Ndlovu- Gatsheni describes the effects of these legacies on post-colonial politics as follows:

> The new Zimbabwean state under ZANU PF failed miserably to make a break with the tradition of nationalist authoritarianism and guerrilla violence as well as colonial settler oppression. The ruling party itself failed to de-militarise itself as a militarised liberation movement, not only in practice, but also in attitude and style of management of civil

[1] The struggles within Zanu have been well described in Fay Chung's recent autobiography, **Re-Living the Second Chimurenga: Memories from Zimbabwe's Liberation Struggle,** Nordic Africa Institute and Weaver Press, Uppsala and Harare, 2006.

> institutions and the state at large. The new ZANU PF government readily assumed the resilient colonial and equally military oriented structures left by the retreating settler state, with serious implications for democracy, human rights and human security (2004).

For most of the 1980's the political milieu was characterised by a combination of repression, in particular the brutal state response to opposition in Matabeleland, and a general deference to the authority and liberation legitimacy of the new state. Most emergent civic bodies and NGOs regarded their activities as complementing the developmental programmes of ZANU PF, and the state could draw on a considerable amount of ideological capital because of its liberation history (Rich Dorman, 2001). By 1987 the ruling party had disposed of two opposition groups, the first, in 1986, by constitutionally removing the entrenched white seats in parliament agreed to at the Lancaster House Constitution, and the second through the brutal Gukurahundi campaign against Zapu in the mid 1980's and the pursuant 1987 Unity Accord between the two major nationalist parties which effectively incapacitated Zapu. Through these measures, the introduction of an executive president in 1987 with immense power, and ready access to the repressive legacies of the settler state, the outlook for opposition politics appeared dismal (Moyo, 1992).

However the combination of a contracting economy, the erosion of state legitimacy through the exposure of corruption in the ruling party, and the emergence of critical social forces such as the labour movement, the student movement, along with critical intellectual and media responses, led to the emergence of another opposition party in 1989. Led by former ZANU PF stalwart, Edgar Tekere, the Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM) fought the ruling party's attempts to impose a one-party state in Zimbabwe, and performed favourably in the 1990 Presidential election. Though the party did not survive for long in the 1990's, and was largely confined in terms of its support base to a small urban and student base, particularly in Tekere's home area in Mutare, ZUM both fractured the seeming unity of ZANU PF and fought for the necessity of multi party politics.

The various attempts at opposition that followed in the 1990's, such as the Zanu Ndonga, the Democratic Party, the Forum Party and the Zimbabwe Union of Democrats, were largely unsuccessful in constructing national constituencies and in providing popular alternatives to ZANU PF. Moreover in the face of determined state repression and an electoral system that provided little space for them to score electoral victories, these parties, with limited capacity to develop viable structures, remained little more than political amusement for the ruling party (Makumbe and Compagnon, 2000). In sum by the mid 1990's opposition politics were largely built around individuals, prone to fractious outbreaks, and unable to develop both a popular message and a national reach. As Masunungure notes, these parties 'appeared to be more aggressive in attacking each other than in directing their firepower at ZANU PF' (Masunungure, 2004: 165).

By the latter half of the 1990's the fortunes of opposition politics took a different turn. The most formidable opposition party of the post-colonial period

emerged into an apparently barren field of dissent. In 1999 the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) was born, the product of a combination of labour struggles, constitutional politics and a generation of human rights struggles, and built on the failures of previous attempts at opposition politics. The new movement also attracted the support of the mainly white large scale commercial farming sector. Constructed in the era of debilitating structural adjustment programmes, the MDC drew on and fed into a growing wave of political and economic disenchantment, and provided a message of 'change' which found resonance through nationally based structures. Through the language of political rights, constitutionalism and economic reform, the MDC and its social partners confronted ZANU PF with its first mass opposition party, and the threat of imminent defeat (Masunungure, 2004: 165; Raftopoulos, 2001). Carried on the wave of the constitutional movement's referendum victory against a ZANU PF imposed constitution in 2000, and backed by the threat of popular mobilisation, the MDC gained nearly 50% of the parliamentary vote in 2000 in the face of enormous electoral obstacles, and state violence. Moreover as Laakso points out, the organisational base of the MDC 'was not merely one of popular discontent with the executive, but an explicit agenda to democratise the state through a peaceful transition' (Laakso, 2004: 13).

Since its dynamic ascension onto the Zimbabwean political stage in the 1990's the MDC has had to face the difficult tasks of building accountable party structures, developing policy positions and peaceful political strategies, and projecting a regional and international profile, against an authoritarian state that has consistently closed down the spaces for opposition politics in the country. Moreover the MDC has had to confront the effects of the country's authoritarian political legacies on its attempts to develop an alternative political culture. It is to the analysis of these issues that we now turn.

THE MDC: CONFRONTING THE CHALLENGES OF OPPOSITION POLITICS IN AN AUTHORITARIAN STATE

Soon after its launch in September 1999 the MDC had to confront a number of organisational and structural problems. At a strategic meeting in early 2000 the leadership outlined the following challenges:

- Lack of coordination of policy committees.
- Lack of coordination between the President's Office and the Secretariat.
- Lack of accountability and procedures in the disbursement of funds.
- Need for clearer procedures in the appointment and discipline of security officials.
- Insufficient consultation between the President and the Vice President.
- Lack of coordination between the party Chairman and other departments.

- The need for more clarity on the functions of the Deputy Secretary General.[2]

The meeting also noted that the 'President's office should provide leadership for the entire party, while facilitating the strengthening of particular departments.'[3] In order to deal with these problems the leadership agreed to rationalise the functions of each position and improve the communication within the leadership, as well as between the leadership and the various levels of the party structures. In addition to these problems, the violent land occupations following the NCA/MDC victory in the February 2000 constitutional referendum confronted the MDC with three major strategic problems: the cordoning off of the rural areas by the ruling party; the elimination of MDC structures and personnel; and the lack of alternative sources of information in rural areas (MDC Strategy Paper, April 2000). In the face of these challenges the MDC set itself the following objectives:

- To facilitate the reduction of levels of political violence and the creation of more peaceful conditions for electioneering.
- To shift the mode of mobilisation to a low profile campaign.
- To provide information on the election process that would increase voter confidence and the assurance of voter secrecy.
- To raise the profile of the MDC campaign message on the economy, particularly land, jobs, indigenisation and investment.
- To re-engage the civic organisations that provided the bedrock for the formation of the MDC.
- To isolate President Mugabe within his own party, at national level and in the regional and international spheres.
- To pressure the police to carry out their duties.
- To maintain the international media focus on the primary goal of the elections, and the monitoring of election violence.
- To minimise the security threat to the leadership of the MDC.[4]

A number of issues emerge from these early assessments. Firstly, the problems of organisation, responsibility and accountability in party structures that would later take on such explosive forms were already apparent. Secondly, the party was aware of the central strategic challenge that confronted it, namely the commitment to a peaceful, electoral process of change, while understanding the growing limitations of this approach in the face of the ruling party's intransigence. As a strategy update paper noted, while the 'strongest weapon' of the MDC was 'public adherence to the principles of democracy and the rule of law', the party 'must not lose sight of the fact that we may be in for a much longer and harder race than we first envisaged' (MDC Strategy Update, 8th May 2000). Thirdly, the MDC, as part

[2] MDC Strategic Meeting, Harare, 6th January 2000. Present at the meeting were Morgan Tsvangirai (President), Gibson Sibanda (Vice President), Welshman Ncube (Secretary General), Fletcher Dulini (National Treasurer), and Gift Chimanikire (Deputy Secretary General). This became known as the Top Six Management Committee.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid.

of its commitment to peaceful politics, was still optimistic, many would say naïve, in its belief that it could hope for a certain minimum level of professionalism from the organs of the state. Fourthly, as the ruling party was in the initial stages of reorganising its party and state structures in the face of the MDC threat, the opposition party believed that it was possible to work on the divisions in ZANU PF and to isolate Mugabe. Particular attention was paid to the fractious Masvingo province where there were long and well publicised differences between the ZANU PF provincial strong man, Edison Zvobgo, and Mugabe. In 2001 it was believed that Zvobgo's position could be summed up as, 'We don't want Mugabe but we are not MDC'.[5] Lastly, in addition to the difficulties faced in attempting to develop its media capacity, the MDC was clearly unsure of how to deal with the problem of rural penetration given the enormous obstacles presented by the land occupations led by the war veterans and supported politically and logistically by the ruling party and state machinery. Some of its suggestions included engaging the support of churches and approaching traditional leaders, but there was little substance provided for the proposed strategies (MDC Strategic Paper, April 2000).

Looking at the problem of structures more closely provides some idea of the organisational problems faced by the MDC in 2000. At an MDC District Workshop in August 2000, a number of problems were registered. It was noted that while structures were in place at district level they were weak at branch level. Conflicts were also reported by some of the committees over poor time-keeping, lack of protocol and the influence of alcohol. A request was made for a code of conduct to be passed on to the Secretary General of the party. There was also a 'strong feeling' that all MPs must communicate with their electorate, 'even if they have made promises that they cannot fulfil in the short-term.' The meeting warned that if the MPs 'do not become visible any further campaigning will be difficult.' The members recommended that in order to strengthen the party there was a need for training in a number of areas: the procedures for running meetings, minute taking; public speaking; conflict resolution mechanisms; organisation; budgeting and allocation of scarce resources; proposal writing; and writing internal memos.[6]

These problems became apparent during campaign periods, when the Party's lack of coordination, strategy and discipline were exposed. A report on the Marondera West campaign in late 2000 revealed a series of operational problems. Youths and security were brought into the area and 'hijacked the campaign as a means to giving employment'. The Provincial Chair 'was allowed to use the campaign for his personal campaign'. In the end, the party spent two million dollars 'dealing with youth and security problems and logistics instead of winning votes and getting voters to the voting stations.' The report on the campaign concluded that:

> The bulk of the youth are bad mannered, undisciplined, uncontrollable and only in it for the money. They left the premises and vehicles they

[5] MDC Strategic Planning Meeting, 6th March 2001.
[6] MDC District Workshop, 19th August 2000. In attendance were the following branches: Mbare 1, Mbare 2, Mbare 3, Waterfalls, Highfield and Harare Province.

> used in a disgusting state and when asked to clean up said - 'I am not the one'. [7]

In a recent, useful study of political parties in Zimbabwe LeBas has analysed the context in which these organisational problems developed. She notes that given the changed political environment from 2000-2003 and the increased ruling party violence that characterised it, 'violence drove party activists into the cities, and formal party structures subsequently collapsed.' Furthermore she observes that the 'most immediate response to this problem was a turn from visible party structures to more amorphous, socially embedded networks' (LeBas, 2005: 183-4). Assessing the state of the party in the aftermath of the 2002 Presidential Election LeBas writes:

> In a post-election report, the MDC's organising department noted that party structures had 'disintegrated'; further there was 'very little or no activity' by provincial structures, due in some cases to misappropriation of funds. Nor could the national executive remain well-informed about conditions outside Harare: an audit in late 2002 found that most provincial leaders were passing along false information about party structures and membership. Members of the national executive pointed to these problems to explain the failure of the planned post-election mass action, saying that it was simply lost in the party structures (Ibid: 186).

This problem of adapting organisational structures to deal with state violence was not only faced by the MDC but also by key civic movements such as the NCA many of whose members also belonged to the MDC. Assessing the 'mass action' strategy adopted by the NCA after 2000, and the violence that was sometimes used by its membership, McCandless concludes:

> In the case of the NCA the research…indicates that the use of violent strategies (even if only by some of their members) undermines their message, which causes disaffection of important NCA constituencies. Moreover, it is ineffectual given their weak position vis-à-vis the violent capacity of the state (2005: 584).

The major organisational response of the MDC to the repressive political environment was to create a parallel structure within the party. LeBas describes this as a 'shadowy party structure, which would be designed to facilitate top-down organising and speedy response to orders from national leadership' (LeBas, 2005: 187). The activities of this structure not only resulted in major problems of accountability and violence within the party structures, but became a central site of struggle for the control of the party between the President and the Secretary General.

The first major sign of the problems that were being caused by this parallel structure was the violence that occurred at the Party headquarters in 2004,

[7] Memorandum: Marondera Campaign, from Topper Whitehead to the Election Director, 1st December 2000.

specifically the beating up of party officials. One of the party officials that was affected by these disturbances, the Director of Security, testified to an internal Commission of Inquiry that this structure was formed by two of the Party Presidents' aides, 'as part of the mass action,' and that over time this structure had 'become a reliable source of force or militia for use in party struggles by unscrupulous politicians'. The official also believed that there was a 'tribal clique of people from Masvingo' who were in control of the parallel structure and who, during the period of Morgan Tsvangirai's treason trial,

> …..strongly believed that the President would be convicted, leaving a vacuum which in their view must never be filled by a Ndebele person contrary to the MDC party constitutional provisions. Their argument was that even if the Vice-President were to take over, the fact that he stays in Bulawayo, the effective job of President would fall into the hands of Prof. Welshman Ncube. This imagination frightened them because for a long time they have been working on a programme to eliminate the Secretary General and those deemed as his surrogates.[8]

Others who gave evidence to this commission accused the Secretary General Welshman Ncube, of wanting to sabotage the project of removing Mugabe, and claimed that Ncube had a secret agenda to divide the party'.[9] The report also implied that there were conflicts between the 'professionals' in the Secretary General's department and the 'quasi-professionals' in the President's office who believed that the Secretary General was 'insubordinate to the President and is working to launch a new party'.[10] Among the major findings of the report was the view that there is a 'strong anti-Ndebele sentiment that has been propagated, orchestrated and instilled into the innocent party members' minds by a senior party leader under the guise of sheer hatred for the Secretary General at a personal level.'[11] One of the recommendations made by the commission was that:

> An investigation into the plot by high-ranking officials around the President's treason trial and the build-up to congress be put in place without delay with a view to establishing the extent to which ethnic hatred and division has damaged the party. Throughout this inquiry direct reference was made to senior leaders being involved in the promotion of tribalism. It is this commission's conviction that those leaders mentioned must be given the opportunity to respond to such disturbing allegations and appropriate action taken without fear or favour.'[12]

The findings of this Commission were not made official within the party as the commissioners failed to agree on the final report. The factionalism that

[8] Commission of Inquiry into Disturbances at Party Headquarters (Draft Report), December 2004, pp. 4-5. The Commissioners were Dr. Tichanona Mudzingwa, the Hon. Miles Mutsekwa and the Hon. Moses Mzila-Ndlovu.
[9] Ibid: 20.
[10] Ibid: 27-28.
[11] Ibid: 31.
[12] Ibid: 32-33.

emerged in the party was reproduced on the Commission and effectively debilitated the finalisation of the report. Notwithstanding the draft nature of the report it did reveal the emergence of very serious cleavages in the party, around the President, Morgan Tsvangirai and the Secretary General, Welshman Ncube. Moreover these differences were being fed and exacerbated by the parallel structures within the party and constructed in both ethnic and at times 'anti-intellectual' terms.

In May 2005 new outbreaks of party violence took place at the Party Headquarters in Harare, the Bulawayo Provincial Office and in Gwanda, and another Commission was set up composed of the Management Committee. The new Commission noted that the 2004 Commission had 'failed to reach a consensus and therefore no punishment had been meted out to the offenders.' As a result most of the youths who led the disturbances from 12-17 May 2005, had previously, by their own admission, been responsible for the assault on the Director of Security in 2004. Once again aides in the President's office were accused of directing the activities of the youth, and the objective of the violence was alleged to relate to the political battles leading up to the forthcoming national party congress. The allegations of the youth were that the 'Secretary General, the Deputy Secretary General, and members of staff were working to replace the President.'[13]

An important point made in the report was the danger of party functionaries mobilising unemployed youth to carry out party violence. It was further admitted that the party 'has no capacity to satisfy youth welfare needs' and that there is a 'general lack of education and orientation on party objectives and values.'[14] This point needs to be situated within the broader context of the culture of violence established and perpetuated by ZANU PF. The central findings of the report were:

- It is common cause that the greater majority of our youths in our structures are activists and unemployed.
- They have no source of income, therefore they are destitute. This makes them vulnerable to political vultures who are cash driven.
- Staff, some party leaders and the external forces are using the youths for various political ambitions and devious goals.
- The party goal and values for which the MDC was founded have been abandoned in pursuit of narrow selfish, self-satisfying ambitions and greed.
- The congress agenda has hijacked the party focus.
- The issue of ethnic affinity is also being abused in the party to form divergent groupings.
- The notion that there are some who are more equal than others and falsely believe they are the only founders of the party, is a divisive issue.

[13] Report of the Management Committee of an Inquiry into the Disturbances and Beatings at Harvest House, Bulawayo Provincial Office and in Gwanda at the late Masera's Funeral, 2005: 6.
[14] Ibid: 12.

- Competing interests of politicians are a threat to the very existence of the party.[15]

As with the 2004 report there was little action taken on the issues raised, apart from the expulsion of several youth believed to have been responsible for the violence. There was no attempt to hold to account the senior party figures alleged to be the 'handlers' of these youth. The party's legal spokesperson David Coltart complained about this failure in the report. In a statement to the National Executive of the party Coltart noted:

> I cannot believe that the youths involved in these despicable acts acted independently. It is common cause that they were unemployed and it is equally clear that they had access to substantial funding. That money must have come from people with access to resources. The instructions to act must have come from people within the Party as no-one else would have the detailed knowledge the youths had access to. In expelling the youths and relatively low ranking members of the security team we have only dealt with the symptoms of the problem, not its root cause.[16]

Coltart also charged that it was 'abundantly clear…that the Management Committee either did not manage to find out who instigated these acts of violence or it chose not to reveal those responsible', and that whatever the case 'there has been an inadequate investigation into who was behind the violence.' Coltart then stated his explanation for the compromised nature of the report:

> It is common cause that the principle reason behind the violence was an alleged power struggle within the Management Committee. For that reason alone the Management Committee should not have conducted the investigation. They were in fact judges in their own cause.[17]

Finally Coltart attempted to reassure Tsavangirai that his Secretary General, Welshman Ncube, had no ambition to replace him as President.

> Within the MDC only Morgan Tsvangirai has sufficient stature to contest the presidency. Welshman Ncube knows that; I know that. Those within the party who seriously suggest that Morgan Tsvangirai's presidency is under threat are either being deliberately mischievous or simply do not understand basic political reality within Zimbabwe.[18]

Discussions on these problems continued amongst the leadership at a management committee retreat in July 2005. Once again the issue of the parallel structure was raised and the allegation was made that a 'kitchen cabinet', made up of Presidential aides, had formed around the President and undermined the decisions of the elected leadership:

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[15] Ibid: 16.
[16] David Coltart, "Statement of David Coltart: MDC National Executive Meeting: 15th July 2005."
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid.

> Members of the Management Committee explained that they felt decisions that were taken by the team were changed after the President consulted with members of his staff, or that staff counteracted their decisions, or took decisions that were beyond their 'brief' or job descriptions.[19]

It is important to note that these allegations were made by four of the six members of the Management Committee, namely the Vice President Gibson Sibanda, the Secretary General Welshman Ncube, the Deputy Secretary General Gift Chimanikire and the National Treasurer Fletcher Dulini. Tsvangirai disagreed saying that these concerns over the 'kitchen cabinet' 'were unsubstantiated…..due to rumour and miscommunication.'[20] The Chair of the party Isaac Matongo, after some equivocation, lined up behind his President. Thus the division within the leadership appeared to be, and was constructed as, an ethnic divide with Tsvangirai's critics, except for Chimanikire, coming from Matabeleland.

At the July retreat the leadership were also fully aware that the party was losing political ground, and that 'deep concerns about the MDC's ability to lead itself, let alone compete effectively against the ruling party exist and are growing monthly.' The leadership then agreed on the need to devise a programme of activities that would 'demonstrate unity, build relationships amongst members of civil society, and create PR opportunities which contradict the consistent negative image of a fractured party.'[21] The Management Committee also noted the central need to focus on the defeat of ZANU PF, because in the absence of this,

> …members are worrying about consolidating existing positions, and any future positions that maintain prestige or financial income. Although the situation internally is precarious, members can still derive status and income from positions within the MDC. The focus of maintaining these positions is distracting from commitment to the political struggle.[22]

While the MDC leadership had to deal with a growing factional struggle, it also had to continue to contend with the strategic difficulties of confronting the Mugabe regime. In the run up to the 2005 general election the leadership resolved that the election message had to change:

> The debate on participation has revolved around the issues of governance. However, experience had shown that elections are won by focussing on bread and butter issues hence jobs and food had been put at the forefront of issues to be addressed by the Party. The immediate challenge was in essence to send the right message to the

[19] Report of the Management Committee Meeting, 30th July 2005, Pretoria.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Ibid.

> people that the MDC not only focuses on human rights and intellectual liberties but day to day issues.[23]

Moreover, given the limitations of electoral participation as a political strategy in the repressive political climate, the party needed to 'strike a balance between voter expectations and the real situation on the ground' Messages had to be communicated which did not create a 'crisis of expectations' and people had to be 'psyched up for a bruising fight.'[24] These statements represented the tension at the heart of the MDC strategic dilemma: a commitment to participate in elections, while recognising the limitations of this option, and preparing its support base for the limits of electoral politics while preparing for an alternative strategy based on mass action. However, the problem has been that as MDC supporters have grown increasingly disillusioned with electoral politics, the party has been unable to develop a sustainable strategy for mass action. This problem has also been true of its civic partners such as the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) and the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA).

In April 2005, soon after the MDC defeat in the general election Morgan Tsvangirai and his Deputy Secretary General, Gift Chimanikire met with leaders from the NCA, the ZCTU and the Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition to discuss the way forward after another electoral defeat. The NCA in particular argued at the meeting that the MDC should not take up its seats in parliament, but instead concentrate on extra-parliamentary struggles, and stop sending confused signals to its support base. The MDC leadership pointed out that there was a strong lobby within the MDC advocating the importance of 'occupying the democratic space in Parliament', notwithstanding the limitations of the electoral process. While the MDC was still unsure of how to proceed, it was also clear that the civic groups had no clear alternative strategy beyond the broad call for mass action.[25]

In addition to these strategic and organisational challenges, the MDC has faced the problem of developing an inclusive, non-tribal and non-racial post-nationalist ideology, which was not a vulgar neo-liberalism. This has proved an exceedingly difficult challenge with the hazards of tribalism, as noted above, already apparent in the factional struggles within the party. The problem of developing a non-racial party has also proved extremely challenging. The 'white face' of the MDC has been heavily exploited by ZANU PF in a country and region where the memories of settler colonial rule are still fresh. This factor has also been an impediment in the mobilisation and media strategies of the MDC. In a post by-election campaign report in 2000, one party secretary made the following observation on the role of white members in MDC campaigns:

> They must not involve themselves physically on the ground as has been the case. They should occupy the back seats so that Zanu (PF)

[23] Report of the Strategic Planning Meeting, 21-22 January 2005, Cape Town.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Author's notes from the Meeting between Morgan Tsvangirai and Gift Chimanikire (MDC) and leaders of the NCA, ZCTU and Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition, held in Harare, 6th April 2005.

> does not see them. Zanu (PF) captures seats because it tells the people that the MDC is for the whitemen. Through ignorance the people believe and they vote Zanu (PF) in.[26]

While this problem was certainly not the same in all areas of the country, it is safe to say that it represented a general challenge for the MDC. White political participation in the politics of independent Zimbabwe was for most of this period marked by the racist legacy of settler politics, and the unofficial pact of the ruling party's Reconciliation Policy. This provided for whites to continue playing a key role in the economy, while having to vacate the political sphere, aside from participation through their various economic lobbying groups. The emergence of the constitutional movement and the MDC, and the major challenge these represented to the ruling party, provided new spaces for the involvement of whites in the political arena. The land occupations and their direct threat to private property rights certainly provided a strong impetus for involvement. However, the inclusive language of the opposition, which appeared in stark contrast to the exclusive racialised discourse of ZANU PF, also provided an invitation to non-racial politics. The following extract is an example of how one individual responded:

> The advent of the No Vote was a watershed in the history of Zimbabwe. ZANU PF and its agents pitched a massive Vote Yes campaign along racial lines with prominent newspaper advertisements like a photograph of two elderly whites with the question "Are you going to allow them to continue to tell you what to do?" The people, the overwhelming majority of them blacks, rejected this propaganda, and in doing so showed just how politically mature they have become, but most importantly to me, sent out a clear signal that racism is not the burning issue that ZANU PF wants it to be. Being part of the white minority which is constantly used as a punch bag by the President when things go wrong, and with it the ill feeling, the No Vote came as an emotional triumph.[27]

This euphoric embrace of the politics of the opposition demonstrated both a lack of historical perspective on the continuing resonance of race in a post settler society and the sense of victim-hood that had begun to mark the narratives of white discourse after 2000, in particular. Harris describes this aspect of white narratives in Zimbabwe as follows:

> Mugabe's revocation of the discourses of reconciliation has allowed for a white re-imagining of the past that…..exculpates white Zimbabwean

[26] Report from the MDC Secretary, Mashonaland East, 26t November 2000.
[27] "Clear Choice": Letter from Bill Searle a businessman and member of the MDC support group in 2000, support@mdc.co.zw Nd. Another example of this kind of sentiment was a letter from an additional member of the MDC support group, businessman Topper Whitehead: "I have never involved myself in politics because like most whites, I did not believe there was any hope of having an influence on the way I would like to see things. I have now involved myself as I believe I can help change things, and let me state clearly I have no intention of standing for office or to be elected for any post." support@mdc.co.zw Nd.

> involvement in racial tensions through dehistoricising that white identity (2005: 107).

Dealing with the weight of such racial legacies in the MDC structures has been immensely difficult. While the MDC has been the party most committed to non-racialism in Zimbabwean politics, the deepening crisis within the party has resulted in less inclusive forms of politics. This has been the result both of the withdrawal of white, particularly white farmer, involvement in the party following the increased violence of the state, and an attempt to deal with the labelling of the MDC as a 'white controlled' party. There is also an important sense in which Mugabe's anti-white message resonates with members of the MDC in the context of the legacies of racism in Zimbabwe. In a critique of the party structures carried out in 2005, the MDC leadership itself viewed the party as having 'moved away from its social democratic, all inclusive, non-tribalistic foundations.'[28] Thus it is clear that one of the responses of the MDC to the authoritarian nationalism of ZANU PF has been a more guarded approach towards its public racial profile, and a greater sensitivity to the ruling party's accusations of foreign domination of opposition politics.[29]

As the organisational and strategic problems deepened in the MDC, the factional struggles within the party intensified. For those in the leadership who were connected to or controlled the parallel structure, the latter became the means for isolating members of the leadership opposed to Tsvangirai in the run up to the proposed national congress in 2006. Most of the energies of these structures have thus been turned on those perceived as enemies within the party, rather than to developing a strategy to confront the Mugabe regime. The last attempt to organise a mass Stay Away on the 9-10th June 2005 by the MDC and its civic partners, constituted as a Broad Alliance, proved a dismal failure. Commenting on the role of the MDC in this action, Atwood has written:

> The MDC's involvement in the action was…half-hearted. In the run up to June 9 and 10, MDC President Morgan Tsvangirai issued a statement urging the people to "mobilise themselves," and warning government that if it continued with Operation Murambatsvina, the people's reaction might be unpredictable. When questioned MDC Secretary General Welshman Ncube distanced the organisation from the activities of the Broad Alliance. Like the ZCTU, the MDC was at the time mired in its own internal commission of inquiry regarding cases of indiscipline and fracturing party unity. It did not take a strong leadership role in coordinating the call to mass action (2005: 4).[30]

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[28] Report of the MDC Management Committee Meeting, 30th July 2005.

[29] One recent vehement assertion of this was made by Job Sikhala, the MDC MP for St. Marys. In the course a newspaper interview with the government controlled Herald, Sikhala pointed to the problem of race as one of the consequences of the MDC's broad alliance of social forces. Referring to one of the key white figures in the MDC Sikhala complained that in the MDC alliance 'we had people like Eddie Cross, who is a white supremacist, an ardent follower of Rhodesian fundamentalism who believes that everything begins and ends with Rhodesia.' "Kitchen cabinet destroyed MDC: Sikhala." Herald, 7th January 2006.

[30] "Operation Murambatsvina" refers to the government's widely condemned urban 'clean up' campaign carried out in May 2005.

This failure was particularly apparent in the light of the government's *Operation Murambatsvina* in May 2005, which constituted a brutal attack on the livelihoods of a large section of urban workers, the major constituency of the MDC. Thus for Ncube and his supporters the use of the parallel structures within the party has been understood as largely a means of isolating and pushing them out of leadership positions at the next congress. It is against this background that the fateful debate over participation in the Senate elections in 2005 took place.

THE SENATE DEBATE AND THE SPLIT IN THE MDC

The issue that brought matters to a head in the MDC was the decision on whether or not to participate in the Senate election in late 2005. Mugabe's major reasons for re-introducing the senate into the political sphere were, both to accommodate those in the ruling party who had lost in the parliamentary elections, and to exacerbate divisions within the MDC, divisions that had been actively cultivated by ZANU PF. To many observers the senate debate first appeared as a fairly innocuous issue that would be resolved within the MDC's top six and National Council. However, given the growing conflict and division within the MDC, the Senate question became the central battleground of the leadership for control of the party. On October 12th 2005, after the top six leadership had failed to find a consensus on the issue, the MDC National Council voted 33-31 (with 2 spoilt papers) to participate in the Senate elections. Tsvangirai's response to the vote was:

> Well you have voted, and you have voted to participate, which as you know is against my own wish. In the circumstances I can no longer continue……No I cannot let you participate in this senate election when I believe that it is against the best interests of the party. I am President of this party. I am therefore going out of this and (will) announce to the world that the MDC will not participate in this election. If the party breaks so be it. I will answer to congress.[31]

The MDC President then left the National Council meeting and soon after held a press conference at which he misinformed the media that the National Council vote was deadlocked at 50-50, and that he had then used his casting vote to decide against senatorial participation. Following this meeting the Deputy President of the party, Gibson Sibanda, wrote to Tsvangirai summoning him to a hearing of the National Disciplinary Committee on the charge that because of his actions at and after the National Council meeting of October 12th, Tsvangirai had wilfully violated clauses 4.4 (a), 6.1.1 (a) and (d) of the MDC constitution as well as clause 9.2 of the Party's Disciplinary Code of Conduct. Sibanda's letter also stated that Tsvangirai had further violated the above clauses after the meeting of the 12th by:

- Writing to all party provincial chairpersons on the 13th October 2005 instructing them to ignore a letter written by the Party's

[31] Trudy Stevenson, 'MDC's October 12 Meeting-the facts'. Zimbabwe Independent 13th January 2006.

Deputy Secretary General instructing provinces to commence selectivity of candidates.

- Writing to the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission on 14th October 2005 falsely advising that the MDC had resolved not to participate in the senate elections and calling upon the Commission to register as Independents all MDC candidates that would offer themselves to contest the election.
- Addressing numerous rallies and meetings in various places throughout Zimbabwe urging members and supporters of the party to boycott the senate elections, contrary to the resolution of the National Council.
- Instructing the party secretariat to re-employ Nhamo Musekiwa and Washington Gaga after they had been dismissed pursuant to a National Council resolution. In doing so you acted in violation of a standing resolution of the National Council contrary to clauses 4.4 (a) and 6.1.1 (d) of the party constitution.[32]

On the same day another letter was written to Tsvangirai informing him that the National Disciplinary Committee had met on the 20th November and resolved to suspend him from his position as President of the party with immediate effect pending his appearance before the Disciplinary Committee on misconduct charges. The letter also instructed Tsvangirai that he was barred from holding, addressing or attending any meetings, rallies or functions organised under the name of the MDC, that he should not visit the party headquarters, regional, provincial or district offices and that he should surrender all party property except the two vehicles issued for his use.[33]

In response to these events Morgan Tsvangirai stated that the pro-senate group had 'already prepared the votes, the ballots and they had bought a lot of people,' and also accused his opponents of not carrying out legitimate provincial consultations.[34] Moreover in response to the legal arguments of his opponents, and accusations that he had 'refused to respect the founding values of the party'[35], Tsvangirai pitched his arguments at a populist level, arguing that his position on the senate expressed the will of the people:

> Even if I am left alone, I will not betray the contract I made with the people. The issue that is there is not about the senate only. It is about whether you want to confront Mugabe or you want to compromise with Mugabe. Some of us are now working towards a new unity accord. We are saying 'no' to unity accord number two. With us there is no unity accord….we will not do what Nkomo did.[36]

[32] Letter from Gibson Sibanda, Vice President of the MDC to Morgan Tsvangirai, President of the MDC, 24th November 2005.
[33] Letter from Gibson Sibanda to Morgan Tsvangirai, 24th November 2005.
[34] Violet Gonda, 'Hot Seat Programme: Tsvangirai says vote buying and self interest swung MDC senate vote.' violet@swradioafrica.com 18th October 2005.
[35] This is a statement from the Deputy Secretary General of the party, Gift Chimanikire quoted in Caesar Zvayi, 'Tsvangirai a dictator: MDC faction.' Herald 1st November 2005.
[36] 'Tsvangirai says faction working with ZANU PF.' The Daily Mirror, 31st October 2005.

In this statement the MDC leader was not only identifying his views with 'the people', he was also appealing to the sentiments of the people of Matabeleland by distancing himself from the possibility of another unpopular 'Unity Accord', and portraying the pro-senate faction as betraying the people of this region. This message was emphasised by the MDC party chair, Isaac Matongo, who accused the Ncube faction of complicity with ZANU PF, stating that the latter wanted to 'see Tsvangirai out and then put someone who could play to the ZANU PF tune.'[37]

The debate over the senate became an ugly public spectacle carried out in the state-controlled and private press, and characterised by disturbing levels of character assassination on both sides. Accusations and counter-accusations of corruption,[38] violence,[39] tribalism[40] and complicity with the ruling party were thrown about liberally. Moreover in a further ironic twist the internal battles in the MDC have ended up in the courts of the Mugabe regime.[41] As the leadership struggle continued Tsvangirai expelled the 'Senate rebels' from the party[42] and convened another National Council meeting which passed a resolution to nullify the disciplinary proceedings instituted against the MDC leader, and 'dissociating the rest of the party from Gibson Sibanda and others.'[43]

The response from the major civic groups to the party struggles has largely been in support of the Tsvangirai position. The boycott of elections coincided with the long-term position of the NCA, while the ZCTU denounced the 'creation of the Senate and urges all workers to oppose it with all their might.'[44] The ZCTU paper *The Worker* made its editorial position clear:

> Now the onus is on the opposition, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) to reject taking part in the senate election. All civic organisations have rejected the constitutional amendments. The MDC did reject them in Parliament and if they want to be taken seriously, they should not take part in elections. Zimbabweans should also stay

[37] Walter Marwizi, 'Plot to oust Tsvangirai,' The Standard, 20th November 2005.
[38] "MDC falls apart: Tsvangirai's financial dealings in ZCTU, Ben-Menashe saga exposed." Herald, 14th November 2005.
[39] "Bid to block Tsvangirai rally flops." The Daily Mirror, 10th November 2005.
[40] This accusation was fuelled by a report that the Deputy President of the MDC, Gibson Sibanda, was alleged to have advocated for an independent state for Ndebele speaking people. At a campaign rally Sibanda is alleged to have said: 'Ndebeles can only exercise sovereignty through creating their state like Lesotho, which is an independent state in South Africa and it is not politically wrong to have the state of Matabeleland in Zimbabwe.' "Sibanda calls for Ndebele State", Daily Mirror, 8th November 2005. Pro-senate MDC spokesperson Paul Themba Nyati denied the report saying that 'not only is the allegation untrue, it also appears to be a deliberate attempt by the newspaper to fan ethnic tensions in the MDC and the country as a whole.' The Independent 18th November 2005.
[41] The most recent example is that the pro-senate faction has filed a Z$100 billion dollar suit against Tsvangirai for allegedly accusing them of colluding with ZANU PF to assassinate the MDC leader. Njabulo Ncube, "The saga continues… Tsvangirai files notice of appeal." Financial Gazette, 2-8 February 2006.
[42] "Tsvangirai expels Senate 'rebels.'" The Sunday Mail, 13th November 2005.
[43] The MDC National Council Meeting and Resolutions, 1st December 2005.
[44] "ZCTU Position on Senate Elections." Sunday Mirror 20th November 2005.

> home during elections to show their displeasure over the government action.[45]

Thus for both factions in the MDC the senate debate took on a wider and more intense significance. For Tsvangirai and the anti-senate campaigners, the boycott campaign was important for several reasons. Firstly, Tsvangirai's political base within the party was increasingly organised through the parallel structures and the 'kitchen cabinet' against those in the top six who were thought to be contesting his leadership. These structures had been built, outside of the control of the Management Committee of the party, both to develop alternative mass action responses to Mugabe's rule and to avoid having to deal with the Secretary General's office. There was thus a reluctance to make them accountable to an electoral strategy under the top six. Secondly, after another electoral defeat in the 2005 general election the MDC was under growing pressure to provide an alternative response to the Mugabe regime, or face the prospect of political irrelevance. Thirdly, Tsvangirai felt that his views resonated with most of the party's support base in believing that there was little point in pursuing electoral politics under the present conditions in Zimbabwe. It is in this context that Tsvangirai called for the boycott of the senate elections and stated:

> The Zimbabwean struggle needs a paradigm shift. Parliament cannot be the main arena of our struggle. Our experience in Parliament since 2000 shows that the struggle resides outside ZANU PF.[46]

For the opposing faction the decision to campaign for participation in the senate election was based firstly on their unwillingness to surrender political strategy to what was thought to be Tsvangirai's 'thuggish' parallel structures, working against Welshman Ncube, Gift Chimanikire and others in this faction. Secondly, this group argued both that the people of Matabeleland would not agree to ceding political ground to the ruling party without a fight, and that in any case the anti-senate argument presented no viable alternative strategy to participation in the elections. Ncube's reluctance to engage with mass action strategies was thus based not only on the belief that the parallel structures were working outside of party accountability through parallel funding, but also that they were not able to develop organised mass action activities in any coherent form. In short they were both unaccountable and ineffective and only ended up exposing the party's elected structures to state harassment.[47] It was against this background that Ncube declared:

> There is no other way of removing Robert Mugabe except through elections. Anyone who tells you the other way is cheating you. Even if ZANU PF says there is an election for a toilet caretaker we will participate.[48]

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[45] Comment: "Boycott Senate Elections." The Worker September 2005.
[46] Morgan Tsvangirai, "Senate: what is in it for the people?" The Financial Gazette, 29th October 2005.
[47] Report on the MDC Management Committee Meeting, Pretoria, 30th July 2005.
[48] "Elections only way to dislodge ZANU PF: Ncube." Daily Mirror, 4th January 2005.

By February 2006 it was clear that the division in the MDC had solidified and the split in the party would be formalised at the forthcoming congresses of the different factions. It is also clear from the analysis in this paper that the senate issue, that provided the pretext for the party divide, was not in itself the fundamental cause of the problems in the MDC. It was merely the site on which the different factions fought out long-standing problems of organisation, structure, accountability and strategy within the party. At the mediation meeting held in October 2005 to try to resolve the party crisis there was a consensus amongst the leadership that the senate issue was a 'tactical difference' and 'a symptom of a disease.' In the discussions that ensued at this meeting the issues raised centred around the problem of the parallel structure, the 'mafia kitchen cabinet', the growth of youth violence, attacks on the authority of the President, conflict and competition between the offices of the Presidency and the Secretary General with the resulting lack of implementation of party programmes, Tsvangirai's perception of the 'destructive' effects of President Mbeki's mediation efforts, infiltration by the regime's Central Intelligence Organisation, and the perception that the division over the senate was based on tribal affiliation in the party. There was, of course, different emphasis on which problems had proved to be most destructive, with Tsvangirai stressing the undermining effects of the Secretary General's office and arguing that the 'consensus leadership' at the top was not the most effective way to confront an authoritarian regime. Alternately, Ncube and three other members of the top six concentrated on the destructive effects of the 'kitchen cabinet' and the parallel structure on the elected structures of the party.

At the end of the first meeting a compromise position was placed on the negotiation table, which included the following positions: firstly, the pro-senate faction would withdraw from the senate election; secondly, the Management committee would deal with the problem of the 'kitchen cabinet' and the parallel structure; thirdly, the leadership would draw up a programme on the way forward. Moreover, henceforth the public recriminations from both sides were to cease. These issues were due to constitute the agenda for the next meeting and were to be kept strictly confidential. The day after this meeting full details of the discussion appeared on the front page of the Independent newspaper. At the second mediation meeting, which lasted forty-five minutes, both sides refused to shift from their positions, with Tsvangirai unwilling to make a commitment on the problem of his aides and the pro-senate faction unwilling to go back on the senate issue. The lack of trust within the leadership was all pervasive, and it was clear that both sides were, at this point, committed to a split in the party. However, it was also clear that neither faction had developed effective strategies to confront the Mugabe government and also that both would have to face the difficult task of once again developing the national constituencies that the united MDC had once claimed. For the anti-senate group the challenge would be to win over the Matabeleland region, while for their opponents the lack of a credible Shona

leader would constitute a huge limitation in their efforts to develop a national profile.[49]

CONCLUSION

A great deal of commentary has been dedicated to the break up of the MDC. Within Zimbabwe, the state media has wallowed in a sense of glib satisfaction and an endless stream of false retrospective 'wisdom'. The country's independent press and the internet news sources have staked their factional claims in the ongoing controversy. However, one of the issues on which both the state and the independent media have concurred is that the MDC crisis emerged because of a lack of good leadership and ideological unity.[50]

While the opposition has certainly displayed leadership problems and faces a huge challenge in constituting an ideological unity, these are not problems peculiar to the MDC. The history of nationalist politics was characterised by its own leadership deficiencies and ideological struggles. Moreover ideological unity can only be constructed through long-term struggles and the project, though at certain historical moments contingently stable, is never complete. The challenge of the MDC has been to break the disciplinary hold of the nationalist legacy and to develop a more democratic, inclusive and plural discourse that is able to confront both national authoritarianism and international dictat. This is the challenge for any progressive movement in the contemporary world, and it is one that the MDC made important progress at national level.

At continental level the opposition party has had much more difficulty in presenting itself as a progressive force against Mugabe's Pan Africanist rhetorical stance. Its limitations at this level have decreased the terrain on which it has been able to operate and develop its vision. More recently the split in the MDC has bred speculation that the division has emerged because of ideological differences between the more 'radical populist' anti-senate faction and the pro-senate 'neo-liberals.' There is little evidence that this is the case with both factions espousing broad social democratic positions and both likely to adopt some form of neo-liberal economic recovery policy. Nevertheless the challenges of developing ideological consistency in the party and the various ideological trends apparent in its pronouncements have caused problems for both the supporters of the MDC and those commenting on its activities.

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[49] This writer was the mediator at the two meetings of the top six and the details of the two paragraphs above are taken from the writers notes on the meetings of the Management Committee held on the 26th and 31st October 2005.

[50] As examples see, Robert Mukondiwa, "MDC death: The post-mortem", The Sunday Mail, 20th November 2005, and Dumisani Muleya "MDC's problem is lack of ideology", The Zimbabwe Independent, 4th November 2005. Jonathan Moyo, one time government critic turned state propagandist and now leader of a new party, the United People's Movement, has made the same point: "…infighting within the MDC was bound to take place ever since the party was formed in 1999 as the ideological question facing it, arising from not having a shared ideology was not whether such a fight would happen but when. The proposition that the root cause of the infighting is because of a lack of a common ideology shared by the MDC leadership is demonstrated by the fact that the infighting is very personalised and when it is not, the issues at stake are procedural and not substantive." "MDC infighting was bound to take place." The Zimbabwe Independent, 4th November 2005.

Notwithstanding these limitations the central fact of the MDC crisis is that it has taken place in an authoritarian national political culture that has persistently closed down the spaces for democratic growth. The loss of three national elections under these conditions, and the fact that the MDC has not been able to successfully challenge these fraudulent elections has led to increasing frustration in both the leadership and general membership of the party. The corrosive effects of this persistent defeat would be enough to challenge the future of most opposition parties. The fact that ZANU PF has conducted its authoritarian politics under a populist anti-colonial and anti-imperialist banner has provided little solace to those forces in Zimbabwe struggling for more open national political spaces.

The broader national and international context of the Zimbabwe crisis has been discussed elsewhere (Hammar, Raftopoulos and Jensen, 2003; Raftopoulos and Phimister, 2004; Phimister Raftopoulos, 2004). This dimension has clearly played an important role in shaping the politics of ZANU PF. External forces have also shaped the form of the debacle in the MDC. Ill conceived international alliances and reports of dubious funding by, and advice from, right wing organisations such as the International Republican Institute and Freedom House[51] are likely to have had their effects on the strategies and leadership stances taken in the party.

Moreover the impact of South African interventions in the MDC has yet to be fully explored. What is clear thus far is that the SA presidency has had serious doubts about the capacity of the MDC to develop a national government and to gain the confidence of the Zimbabwean armed forces, and these factors underlay the push by the SA government for a government of national unity in Zimbabwe. President Mbeki's dealings with the leadership of the MDC have also contributed to the growing distrust between the two factions within the party, with Morgan Tsvangirai feeling increasingly distrustful of the South African leader's relationship with the Ndebele leaders in the MDC. This paper has not addressed these wider concerns and future discussions will need to penetrate this important dimension. At present there is much speculation but little evidence produced in the discussion of this factor, but clearly there are disturbing questions that need to be answered.

This discussion has concentrated on the internal factors in the MDC crisis and both the strengths and weaknesses of the paper stem from this emphasis. Nevertheless, it is hoped that the paper has provided a more informed basis for discussion of the crisis in Zimbabwe's major opposition party. At present the future of opposition politics in Zimbabwe appears bleak, with neither side in the MDC offering a viable strategy to confront the ruling party. This current malaise in opposition politics is likely to have a broader dampening effect on the politics of civil society at a time when the major civic groups are themselves struggling to survive state repression and general public

[51] The Herald reported that Morgan Tsvangirai and eight top officials his faction were deported from Zambia on the 2nd February 2005 after meeting with representative of Freedom House and losing Zambian presidential candidate Anderson Mazoka. " Zambia deports Tsvangirai", Herald, 3rd February 2005.

despondency. The challenge for opposition forces is now to rethink and reconfigure the organisational structures and strategic interventions that are needed both to confront a repressive regime and build a sustainable alternative, democratic culture. In this difficult process the lessons learnt from the fracturing of the MDC will be invaluable.

Postscript: April 2006.

This paper was written prior to the formal split in the MDC, which took place after the two factions held their respective congresses in February and March 2006. In light of the split with Tsvangirai, and given the ethnic dynamic of Zimbabwean politics, the pro-senate faction was forced to look for an electable Shona leader to oppose both Tsvangirai and Mugabe. Given the lack of a suitable candidate within the existing ranks of the pro-senate faction, the latter looked to a candidate outside of the existing leadership structure and elected Arthur Mutambara, a university professor and former student leader in the 1980's. From his election speech it was clear that Mutambara was keen to appropriate the language of radical nationalism that had been seen as the preserve of Mugabe and his party, and attempt to link it to the discourse of human rights and democratic accountability that had dominated the language of opposition and civic politics since the 1990's. Mutambara set out his vision in the following terms:

> We stand opposed to any form of imperialism, violation of state human rights and unlilateralism. We will not accept assistance at the expense of our dignity, values and sovereignty. We make a clear distinction between strategic partners and political allies.
> We are anti-imperialist, driven by nationalist interest and informed by Pan African ideals. I do not believe in sanctions.[52]

Mutambara was also keen to establish links between the struggles of the MDC and the legacy of the liberation struggle:

> We are also coming in with the tradition of the liberation war recognising the role played by people like Chitepo, Tongogara, Nikita Mangena and John Nkomo. No one owns the history of the liberation struggle. We are coming in the tradition of ZANLA and ZIPRA fighters.[53]

For the future, it will be interesting to assess the ways in which Mutambara is able to manage the discursive and strategic tensions in a political project that requires the need for both a radical anti-imperialist stance and a commitment to civic struggles around democratisation and human rights. It is however important that this project be attempted given the distortions in Mugabe's severing of the two discourses. At the very least, Mutambara's new political language is an important development on the Zimbabwean political landscape.

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[52] Nkululeko Sibanda, "Mutambara attacks Britain." The Daily Mirror, 27th February 2006.
[53] "Mutambara calls for MDC re-unification". The Daily Mirror, 14th March 2006.

For Tsvangirai and his camp the importance of their congress was to show the support of large numbers of the MDC constituency, and to consolidate the power of the presidency in the party structures. In his opening speech Tsvangirai acknowledged the contribution of the pro-senate leadership:

> Allow me to note the work done by my colleagues who have chosen not to be with us today but who pioneered and contributed to the growth of the MDC and this democracy project with us for many years. Thanks you for risking life and limb to try and rebuild Zimbabwe. We have not forgotten that contribution.[54]

Tsvangirai's speech also stressed the importance of 'peaceful democratic resistance'. He declared:

> The options open to us are very clear. We need a short sharp programme of action to free ourselves. The call is made to you once again to intensify the peaceful democratic resistance to the current tyranny. Your resilience to reclaim your rights has shaken Mugabe's corridors of power.[55]

Notwithstanding the declarations of both MDC parties, the strategic, organisational and ideological challenges that have been discussed in this paper remain in different ways for both sides. The hard work of rebuilding an effective opposition to confront Mugabe's authoritarian regime remains to be done, even as the latter puts in place further legislation on communications surveillance of its citizenry, and an anti-terrorist law constructed largely to further criminalise the activities of the opposition.

[54] Foster Dongozi and Valentine Maponga, "15000 attend MDC congress." The Standard, 19-25th March 2006.
[55] Ibid.

NON-PARTY POLITICAL ACTORS IN DEMOCRATIC POLITICS IN ZMBABWE

The principal non-party political actors in the struggles for democratisation currently taking place in Zimbabwe include the armed forces, civil society in general and specific civil society groups such as the church, the labour movement, the media, the legal profession, women's organisations and Diaspora political groups. This chapter briefly outlines the composition of these organisations and the nature of their involvement in Zimbabwe's current struggles for democratic change.

THE ARMED FORCES

The armed forces comprise the Army, Air Force, War Veterans, Militia/Paramilitary units, Police, Prison Service and Central Intelligence Organisation. Since 1980, they have been an important factor in post-colonial Zimbabwean politics, but until recently avoided direct and open involvement in party politics.

From 1999 to the present, a period in which the ruling ZANU PF party has faced intense challenges to its political hegemony, the army more openly supported the ruling party. Evidence of the army's support for the political status quo has included public pronouncements on 'acceptable' electoral outcomes. The armed forces have also used disproportionate force to suppress anti-government protests and have been implicated in mass assaults on alleged or real opposition supporters. There has also been a steady trend towards the militarization of civilian posts, with the government appointing serving or retired military officers to key government positions. Together, these developments have resulted in the erosion of good civil-military relations in Zimbabwe.

CIVIL SOCIETY

Civil society in Zimbabwe has gone through various stages of development in the post-colonial period. In the early 1980s, most NGOs were welfare orientated and focused on supplementing the state's social programmes. This stance shifted in the mid 1980s to a focus on developmental activities. When the government started implementing the International Monetary Fund and World Bank sponsored Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) in the late 1980s, NGOs shifted their focus to poverty-alleviation programmes aimed at mitigating the adverse impact of ESAP on workers.

However, as the post-colonial state's economic mismanagement and political misrule became more evident from the mid-1990s onwards, civil society groups turned their attention mainly to human rights, constitutional reform and other governance and democratisation issues.

One of the significant civil society groups to emerge within this context was the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA) that was officially launched in 1998. The assembly included trade unions, student organisations, women's organisations and many other civil-society groups. It successfully established

a broad consensus in its campaign for constitutional reform and played a key role in ensuring the rejection, in a referendum held in 2000, of an undemocratic draft constitution produced by the government-controlled constitutional commission.

The Zimbabwe crisis has continued to contribute to the emergence of new civil society groups, among them the Crisis Coalition, working for democratic change alongside the more established groupings.

The Church

The church comprises a wide range of Christian organisations and their structures. Some of the major organisations under which mainstream churches fall include the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference (ZCBC), the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) and the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ).

The church's involvement in post-colonial democratic politics has been both complex and ambiguous. At different times, sections of the church have come out strongly opposed to government action whilst others have upheld the state's legitimacy in the face of authoritarianism. These divisions in the church came to the fore during the constitutional reform debate of 1999/2000. The ZCC and a number of prominent church leaders decided to support the government led constitutional commission while the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP) supported the NCA led constitutional reform movement.

The multiple roles that the church has assumed in its interaction with the state during the current Zimbabwe crisis include the following: the role of mediator, trying to encourage a negotiated settlement between the ruling ZANU PF and the opposition MDC after the flawed presidential elections of 2002; the role of provider of humanitarian assistance to the hundreds of thousands of victims of the government's widely condemned *Operation Murambatsvina (Restore Order)* of 2005.

The Labour Movement/Trade Unions

The labour movement is made up of numerous trade unions mostly affiliated to the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions, (ZCTU). In the 1980s, the labour movement was weak, divided and subordinate to the state, which at that time enjoyed a high level of political legitimacy. The leadership of the ZCTU, during this period, was also determined by the state. However, from the late 1980s through the 1990s, the adverse impact of Economic Structural Adjustment Programmes (ESAP) on workers combined with growing state authoritarianism led to the emergence of a militant labour movement that began to challenge the political hegemony of the ruling ZANU PF party.

The ZCTU during the period established alliances with other civil society groups, such as student organisations, which were also pushing for democratic change. The growing strength of the ZCTU was demonstrated when in the late 1990s it organised successful general strikes and several national 'stay-aways'. The ZCTU also began to make linkages between the

economic problems the country was facing and issues of governance and democratisation.

As the pressures exerted on the state to democratise mounted in the second half of the 1990s, the ZCTU's influence continued to grow. It played a fundamental role in the formation of the opposition MDC in 1999, providing much of the top leadership and grassroots support base for the new party. That the ZCTU has remained an important player in the current struggles for democratisation in Zimbabwe is a function of the authoritarian state's unrelenting assault on its leadership and structures.

The Women's Movement/Women's Organisations

The women's movement, made up of diverse women's organisations, has since independence in 1980 been an important part of post-colonial civil-society. A series of gender sensitive laws passed by the government in the early 1980s encouraged most women's organisations to work towards eliminating discrimination against women within state-controlled structures. By 1983, however, the state's unwillingness to genuinely transform gender relations in order to end the exploitation and oppression of women was evident. This led to the emergence of women's organisations situated outside the state and determined to confront it in their fight against patriarchal power and oppression. The Musasa Project, established in 1988 to deal with issues relating to gender violence against women, the Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre and a Zimbabwean branch of Women and Law in Southern Africa were among the women's organisations set up in response.

Between 1995 and 2000, the issue of constitutional reform became the central issue in Zimbabwean politics. Women, convinced that much of the discrimination against them was founded on customary law, saw this as a unique opportunity to lobby for constitutional reforms that would resolve their grievances. This contributed to the establishment in 1999 of the Women's Coalition on the Constitution. Comprising 66 female activists drawn from 30 diverse women's and human rights organisations, the coalition sought to get women to speak with one voice in demanding certain constitutional rights.

The participation of women's groups in the NCA led constitutional reform process also showed how women's gender-specific demands had been integrated into the broader demand for democratic change. One of the most visible women's organisations that continue to militantly pursue this double struggle is Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA) established in 2003. WOZA has, since its formation staged over 30 anti-government protests in which the police have arrested over 800 women.

The Legal Profession

The legal profession encompasses the judiciary, lawyers in academia and in public and private practice. Some sections of the legal profession are represented in professional organisations such as the Law Society of Zimbabwe and others have formed civil society organisations such as Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights.

Though the legal profession has always played a role in Zimbabwe's democratic politics, it started assuming a high level of public visibility in February 1999 when some High Court judges presented a petition to President Mugabe raising questions about the state's growing subversion of the rule of law. The petition met with an angry response. President Mugabe called on its authors to resign after denouncing them as a racist white bench bent on dictating how the black leadership of the country should exercise power.

The conflict between the Executive and the Judiciary increased when in 2000 the Judiciary issued rulings confirming the unconstitutionality of the government's violent land reform programme. The top levels of the judiciary were subsequently subjected to sustained legal and extra-legal attacks by the government. Many High Court judges, among them, Chief Justice Anthony Gubbay, were forced to resign or go into early retirement. The government, under the guise of Africanising the bench, appointed pliant black judges susceptible to political manipulation as demonstrated by some of their rulings and their willingness to accept state patronage. The legacy of these developments includes the current widespread public perception that the independence of the judiciary has been compromised.

The Media

The media here refers to both print and electronic media (radio, television and the internet). Both the state owned and private media have since 1980 been an integral part of democratic politics in post-colonial Zimbabwe. Historically, the state-owned media has given its support to the government of the day while the privately-owned media has made it possible for those voices critical of or opposed to the government to be heard. In the early to mid-1990s privately owned newspapers such as the *Daily Gazette* and the *Sunday Gazette* played an important role in providing a platform for the expression of alternative non-state views.

The intense political contestations that characterised the Zimbabwean crisis from 1999 to the present led the media to assume a more important role in reporting on events in the country. The state owned newspapers such as *The Herald* and *The Sunday Mail* went to unprecedented lengths to uncritically support the government's actions and policies. Private newspapers, among them the now closed *Daily News* challenged the official version of the Zimbabwe crisis by exposing, especially during the 2000 and 2002 elections, the government's subversion of the rule of law and its widespread violations of human rights. These media reports reflected the political polarisation in the country.

Since 1999, the private media has had to conduct its activities in what is arguably one of the harshest media environments in the world. The government has resorted to draconian legal and extra-legal measures to curtail the freedom of the press. The notorious Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) and the Broadcasting Services Act have been used to close down newspapers considered critical of government and to deny broadcasting licences to any independent broadcasters. These

developments have contributed to the emergence of Diaspora electronic and print media organisations that are playing an increasingly important role in providing alternative views on political developments in Zimbabwe.

THE DIASPORA CIVIC MOVEMENT

The Diaspora civic movement comprises numerous civic pressure groups and media organisations, based outside Zimbabwe and all working in their individual and collective capacity to bring about democratic change in Zimbabwe. Some of the more prominent include the Association of Zimbabweans Based Abroad and the Zimbabwe Vigil Coalition. Diaspora media organisations such as the daily news webites, *Zimonline* and *NewZimbabwe.com*, the radio stations, *Radio voice of the People (VOP)*, *Studio 7* and *SW Radio Africa*, have also been established partly as a consequence of Zimbabwe's repressive media laws.

Though it has historical antecedents in pre-independence Zimbabwe, current Diaspora activism is in many ways a logical outcome of Zimbabwe's politically repressive and economically harsh climate. The latter has forced millions of Zimbabweans to become political and economic refugees in countries in the Southern African region, in Europe and the Americas.

The Zimbabwean government has established at least one Diaspora civic group to try and give the impression that it also enjoys considerable political support among Zimbabweans in the Diaspora. The activities of this group, known as the December 19th Movement and headed by Coltrane Chimurenga, have enjoyed extensive coverage in the state-owned media. The government has also resorted to jamming the broadcasts of independent radio stations such as *VOP* and *SW Radio Africa*. All this indicates how seriously it takes Diaspora activism.

NON-PARTY POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT WITH STATE AUTHORITARIANISM: 1980 –2005

This chapter examines how the various non-party political actors in Zimbabwe have engaged with state authoritarianism since 1980, but with particular emphasis on the period 2000 to 2005. Some of the landmark events which all of the non-party political actors have had to respond to during this period include the following: the 1999/2000 constitutional reform debate which culminated in the rejection of the government's draft constitution in the February 2000 referendum; the government's violent fast- track land reform programme initiated in 2000; the June 2000 parliamentary elections and the 2002 presidential elections, both of which were characterised by widespread state-sponsored political violence; *Operation Murambatsvina (Restore Order)*, conducted by the state in 2005, which resulted in hundreds of thousands of Zimbabweans losing their homes and livelihoods.

THE ARMED FORCES

The armed forces' interaction with state authoritarianism over the past 5 years has resulted in the progressive deterioration of civil-military relations in Zimbabwe. A significant long-term contributory factor to Zimbabwe's current poor civil-military relations was the post-colonial state's failure to establish a balanced and truly national army from the three armed factions that had participated in the guerrilla war prior to independence. Efforts to integrate the factions, namely the Southern Rhodesian Defence Forces, ZANLA and ZIPRA (the armed wings of the two major liberation movements), ZANU and ZAPU, had to overcome divisions along political, racial, class, regional and ethnic lines.

The ruling ZANU PF party took advantage of the flaws in the integration system to put forward its factional forces as the 'national' force. This laid the basis for the poor post-colonial civil-military relations that developed as the 'national' army that emerged from the integration process did not serve national political interests, but those of the ruling ZANU PF party.

These poor civil-military relations have since 2000 manifested themselves in the army's growing intervention in party politics on behalf of and in support of the ruling party. The relationship between the armed forces and the ruling party has been in many ways a symbiotic one. Senior levels of the armed forces have, in return for their interventions in support of the ruling party, been rewarded by being given, among other forms of state patronage, farms seized from white farmers as part of the land reform programme and appointments to key government posts. The growing role of the armed forces in government institutions normally manned by civilians has led to what some analysts view as the progressive militarization of the state.

Measures taken by the armed forces to help ZANU PF contain and suppress popular pressures for democratic change include purging its ranks of all perceived opposition elements and openly campaigning for ZANU PF in national elections. There has also been a marked involvement of the armed

forces in the administration of the electoral processes in Zimbabwe. The government has appointed armed forces personnel to hold posts or carry out functions that influence the political process in favour of ZANU PF. Such personnel have been appointed to head or participate in bodies responsible for voter registration, delimitation of political constituencies, supervision of polling processes and the announcement of poll results. The state's heightened desire to influence or manipulate electoral processes to their advantage should be viewed as a reaction to the opposition MDC's strong performance in the parliamentary elections of 2000 and the presidential elections of 2002.

The government has also placed the armed forces at the forefront of measures and programmes designed to frustrate and suppress political opposition. These included *Operation Murambatsvina (Restore Order)*, Operation Garikai/Hlalani Khuhle, Operation No Turning Back/Hatidzokere Shure and Operation Recover Gold. The armed forces have also clandestinely taken over privately owned newspapers in order to influence public opinion to the advantage of the ruling party.

CIVIL SOCIETY

In considering civil society's engagement with state authoritarianism over the past 5 years, it is important to note that civil society in post-colonial Zimbabwe has had to establish itself in an environment in which there was no deeply entrenched tradition of allowing a diverse range of democratic interests and voices to be heard and represented.

Civil society in post-colonial Zimbabwe initially confined itself to supplementing various social and economic activities carried out by the state. Increasing dissatisfaction with economic and social hardships in the 1990s, however, compelled civil society to make the transition from a state-supplementary role to a more confrontational one. The power and diversity of civil society rose significantly during this period and was reflected in the increased influence of organisations such as the ZCTU and the NCA. The civic movement also played a fundamental role in the formation of the opposition MDC in 1999 and the defeat of the government's draft constitution in 2000. It's effectiveness in mobilising public opinion against state authoritarianism has, since1999, made it a target of more profound levels of state repression.

From the contentious 2000 parliamentary elections to the present, Zimbabwean civil society has responded to state authoritarianism by performing three major roles. The first has been to document and publicise the extensive human rights abuses that accompanied among other events, the land invasions, the 2000 and 2002 elections and Operation Murambatsvina/Restore Order (May to September 2005). This process has entailed lobbying regional, continental and international organisations such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the African Union, (AU), the European Union (EU) and the United Nations (UN) to censure the Zimbabwe government for its human rights violations.

The second role played by civil society has been a humanitarian one involving the provision of medical care, safe housing and legal support to thousands of victims of state-sponsored violence. Civil society organisations that have taken the lead in providing this humanitarian and legal assistance include Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights and the Legal Resources Foundation and Amani Trust.

The third role played by civil society has been to provide civic education to Zimbabweans on issues relating to their voting, education, health, gender equality and other rights. The ability of civil society to perform this role has been progressively curtailed by legal and extra-legal measures taken by the state. Prior to the 2000 parliamentary elections, state harassment of NGOs as well as severe restrictions on their access to rural areas significantly undermined the ability of these organisations to educate Zimbabweans about their voting rights. Draconian legislation such as AIIPA and POSA has placed further constraints on the ability of civil society to provide civic education to Zimbabweans.

The NGO Bill passed by parliament in 2004 and now on the verge of being signed into law by President Mugabe, seeks to give the government sweeping powers over the activities of NGOs. Among other things it seeks to ban foreign funding for human rights NGOs. The prospect of this Bill being signed into law has already had an adverse impact on NGO activities. Some foreign donors are now reluctant to fund NGOs most of which rely on foreign donor funds to sustain their activities. In addition, some NGOs, in an attempt not to antagonise government into closing them down, have either scaled down or stopped programmes that they think may anger the government.

The Church

The Church's interaction with state authoritarianism since 2000 needs to be located within the broader context of its relations with the state since 1980. The church has both legitimised and called into question the authority of the state. Different sections of the church have also responded differently to the same challenges.

Between 1980 and 2000 the Church largely failed to take a strong stand against two major challenges presented by the post-colonial state. The first was the post-colonial state's retention and subsequent entrenchment of a culture of impunity for human rights violations committed mostly by state security agencies. This failure began in 1980 when the Church endorsed, without reservations, a general amnesty that accompanied the independence peace settlement and that was viewed by many as crucial in fostering the post-colonial government's policy of reconciliation. This amnesty covered even those who had been responsible for horrendous crimes and human rights abuses during the war leading up to independence. In 1982 the government reinstated pre-independence legislation granting government security agencies immunity from prosecution. Most sections of the Church failed to speak out against the government action.

When the Matabeleland conflict (1982-1987) broke out, certain sections of the Church, for instance the Catholic Church through its Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP), played an important role in uncovering and calling for an end to the gross violations of human rights by state security agencies involved in the conflict. The 1987 Unity Accord that brought the conflict to an end was accompanied by amnesties granting immunity from prosecution to fighters from both sides of the conflict who had committed human rights violations. There was again little opposition from the Church to these amnesties. The church's acquiescence to the government's entrenchment of a culture of impunity for state sponsored human rights violations was due to, among other factors, ignorance of the true extent of atrocities committed by state security agencies during the Matabeleland conflict. The true scale of these violations belatedly came to the knowledge of the general public in 1997 when the CCJP and the Legal Resources Foundation published a comprehensive report on human rights violations that occurred during the conflict.

The second major challenge that the church had to respond to was the post-colonial state's steady gravitation towards authoritarian rule. A series of constitutional amendments carried out by the government in the post-Unity Accord period laid the legal basis for authoritarian rule by establishing an Executive Presidency that was given wide-ranging powers at the expense of the legislature and the judiciary. The amendments also progressively watered down constitutional rights and freedoms. The Church failed to speak out against these amendments or to strongly support individuals such as human rights lawyer, David Coltart, who openly condemned the emerging authoritarianism in Zimbabwe.

Between 2000 and 2005, certain elements of the church succumbed to ZANU PF's conscious strategy to either co-opt church leaders into supporting its policies or intimidate them into silence over its abuses. So determined was ZANU PF to secure priestly endorsement of its legitimacy that it provided support for a 'parallel church' headed by previously unknown pastors such as Obadiah Musindo. These pastors openly campaigned for ZANU PF in return for financial and material rewards. Clergymen from established churches, such as Archbishop Nolbert Kunonga of the Anglican Church also openly expressed their support for ZANU PF after being given farms under the government's land reform programme. Others like Pius Ncube, the Catholic Archbishop of Bulawayo, refused to be bought or intimidated into silence over the government's repressive policies. During the same period, different sections of the church also reacted differently to the aggressive and far-reaching measures taken by government to progressively reduce democratic space in the country. These measures included undermining the independence of the judiciary and attacking the independent press.

The church established a constructive role for itself in the national political process by actively participating in the national debate over the government's draft constitution, which sought to further entrench authoritarian rule. The Church collaborated with civil society groups such as the NCA to expose the limitations of the government's draft constitution, which was subsequently rejected by Zimbabweans in the February 2000 referendum.

The church was divided in its response to the human rights abuses perpetrated by the state in implementing the violent and chaotic land reform programme it initiated in 2000. Some sections of the church openly condemned the abuses while others remained silent. The former included Reverend Tim Neill who resigned from his own (Anglican) church in protest at its complicity with repressive government policies. Neill established the Zimbabwe Community Development Trust to provide urgent humanitarian assistance to farm workers displaced by the government's violent land invasions.

The church was more pragmatic and cohesive in its response to *Operation Murambatsvina (Restore Order)* launched by the government in 2005. This operation aimed at breaking up the MDC's urban support base led to an estimated 700, 000 people losing their homes and sources of livelihood. The church issued strong statements condemning the government's actions and offered shelter and food to hundreds of victims. The church also began to extend its humanitarian role beyond Zimbabwe's borders. In August 2005, a delegation of 8 pastors from the Zimbabwe National Pastors Conference made a fact-finding visit to South Africa to investigate the plight of hundreds of thousands of refugees living in holding camps on the border.

The Labour Movement/Trade Unions

The Labour Movement's engagement with state authoritarianism between 2000 and 2005 has been heavily influenced by the impact of state repression and economic crisis on its activities. Its interaction with state authoritarianism should be viewed within the context of the intense struggle for influence and power between labour and the state, a struggle that dates back to the late 1980s and has resulted in the present stalemate between the two forces.

The Labour Movement began challenging ZANU PF's political and economic hegemony in the second half of the 1990s. This stance arose out of a growing discontent with the repressive nature of the government's defacto one-party state and with the marked economic decline and increased levels of state corruption. The militancy of the movement initially expressed itself in numerous strikes directed at employers in different sectors between 1995 and 1998. In 1996, there was a long strike by nurses, teachers and civil servants. Bigger general strikes organised by the ZCTU and referred to as 'stay-aways' also took place in 1997 and 1998. These strikes were viewed as directed against the government itself and sometimes resulted in rare alliances between labour and employers. The December 1997 'stay-away'' against a new government levy resulted in its abandonment under pressure.

The Labour Movement's active participation in the emergence of the constitutional reform movement, spearheaded by the NCA, resulted in contestation over the economic terrain (in the form of stay-aways) being combined with that on the constitutional and political terrain. The contest between labour-aligned and state-aligned forces reached its climax with formation of the opposition MDC in 1999 and the rejection of the state-sponsored draft constitution in February 2000. These victories on the part of

the labour aligned forces were the main catalyst for the unleashing of a harsher brand of state authoritarianism from 2000 onwards. The forms and strategies of the repression that the ZCTU was subjected to are well documented in various human rights reports. They included assaults and murder of trade union activists, arson attacks on regional union offices and frequent police raids on the ZCTU Head Office.

This state repression was not directed at the Labour Movement alone, but against diverse groups such as white commercial farmers, students and civil society groups seen as supporting the MDC. There were, however, four reasons why the trade unions were a major target of state repression. Firstly, they were viewed by the state as the main base of organisational support for the MDC. Secondly, the unions were viewed as the incubator of a new breed of opposition politicians such as Tsvangirai and Sibanda who were elected President and Vice-President of the MDC. Thirdly, the state sought to instigate and fuel divisions within the ZCTU, by orchestrating episodes of violence within the movement and by tarnishing the image of its leaders through the state-owned press. It also sought to dilute the influence of the ZCTU by supporting rival trade unions such as the Zimbabwe Federation of Trade Unions (ZFTU) whose membership is negligible in comparison with that of the ZCTU. Finally, the state used draconian legislation such as POSA to prevent and frustrate ZCTU meetings and to undermine its support base by preventing the entry into Zimbabwe of delegates from regional and international labour organisations.

The sharp economic decline that Zimbabwe has experienced since 2000 has also had a very adverse effect on the Labour Movement. These effects include a significant decline in formal sector employment resulting in a corresponding trend towards the informalisation of jobs. The resultant widespread job insecurity has resulted in a noticeable decline in labour militancy and the weakening of the ZCTU's organisational capacity. The ZCTU's capacity to run various programmes has also been adversely affected by declining union membership and revenues. Economic hardships combined with state authoritarianism have also had the effect of relegating political mobilisation and community action to a secondary position as workers prioritise their individual rather than collective economic survival. All these developments have clearly weakened the Labour Movement, but have thus far failed to cause its disintegration or break the stalemate that exists between labour and the state.

The Women's Movement/Women's Organisations

The engagement of women's organisations with the post-colonial state dates back to the 1980s. Relations between the state and these organisations were initially cordial/hopeful. The Ministry of Community Development and Women's Affairs, established in 1981, was initially perceived by women as presenting them with a platform to advance their interests with government support. However, this ministry, in consonance with ruling party dictates, limited its activities to supporting women within highly circumscribed notions of their place in society, consistently evading any challenge to the oppressive and exploitative status quo. The gradual exposure of the state's limited

commitment to ending women's subordination and exploitation in society resulted in women's organisations adopting a more confrontational attitude towards the state.

Among the developments that hardened the resolve of women's organisations to challenge state power and patriarchy was Operation Clean Up carried out by the government in October 1983. The operation, which government claimed was aimed at ridding the urban areas of prostitutes resulted in 6,000 women of all ages and backgrounds being arbitrarily rounded up. The women, most of whom were not prostitutes were abused and humiliated by the police who detained them in inhumane conditions. The fallout between women's organisations and the state that occurred as a result of this operation contributed to the emergence of a new type of women's activism that took place outside the state and brought together women from diverse social and racial backgrounds. This activism centred on ending discrimination against women.

By 1995, there were over 25 registered women's organisations each independently addressing issues relating to various aspects of women's lives in urban and rural areas. This growth in women's organisations occurred at a time when international development agencies were increasing their funding for distinctly gendered development programmes. The conceptual understanding and articulations of gender as a political struggle shown by these organisations was not uniform. Some exhibited an openly feminist orientation and others a more conservative one.

These women's organisations were also affected by increasingly hostile state responses to civil society's growing effectiveness in mobilising Zimbabweans to confront the state over the economic decline and political repression that characterised the late 1990s. Female activists in women's organisations became targets of the state-sponsored violence directed at civility society. These developments highlighted the need for women's organisations to redefine traditional strategies for engaging the state and other elements of civil society. In particular, female activists developed a heightened consciousness of the need to establish effective coalitions to confront an increasingly hostile state. The initial alliances established by women between 1995 and 1998 were tenuous, the product of careful negotiation with women's organisations that had divergent interests.

The establishment of an effective women's coalition was accelerated by the constitutional reform agenda that arose in the late 1990s. Women saw the constitutional reform process as an important window of opportunity to seek redress for discrimination against women, much of which they viewed as being founded on customary law and culture. In June 1999, the Women's Coalition on the Constitution was established. It comprised a network of women activists, researchers, academics and representatives from a wide range of women's and human rights organisations. The central aim of the coalition was to unite and inform women about how to advance their collective interests within the constitutional reform process.

Though the coalition made a decision not to form an alliance with either the NCA or the government, which were championing rival constitutional reform processes, divisions emerged within the coalition. Women were divided over their political allegiances and over the strategies required to achieve their goals. Some favoured working for reform within the government led constitutional process, while others favoured alignment with the NCA led reform process. The coalition eventually resolved to campaign for the rejection of the government's draft constitution on two principal grounds. First, that it did not guarantee many fundamental rights for women and second that it generally disregarded the wishes of the Zimbabwean people for democratic change. This shows that the coalition perceived itself as being involved in a double struggle in which they were fighting for both women's rights and democratic change.

The coalition's contribution to the rejection of the government's draft constitution highlighted the advantages of uniting women across political and class divides. The coalition's organisational effectiveness emboldened it to campaign for the election of female candidates in the June 2000 parliamentary elections. The state, still smarting from the rejection of its draft constitution had taken note of the fact that the women's coalition had developed into a formidable political force. Female political activists and parliamentary candidates from both sides of the political divide became victims of the wave of political violence that characterised the election and post-election period. In the face of this state onslaught, many women were compelled to prioritise their personal and financial security and scale down their political activism. The discourses of 'fragmentation', 'weakening' and 'going underground' currently being articulated within the women's movement must be viewed in the context of the legacy of earlier militant engagement with state authoritarianism,

The Legal Profession

In responding to state authoritarianism over the past 5 years, the legal profession has faced a number of challenges, most of which can be attributed to democratic deficiencies in the country. One of these challenges is that the authoritarian state has, in its determined effort to subvert the rule of law and undermine the judiciary, intimidated judges and lawyers often subjecting them to abuse through the state owned media. The list of judges forced into resignation or early retirement by state intimidation includes Chief Justice Anthony Gubbay, High Court Judges, Justice Blackie, Justice MacNally and others. Other challenges related to the administration of justice include ensuring equal access to the law by all Zimbabweans and ending delays in the administration of justice, especially in politically contentious cases.

Lawyers representing clients regarded as government opponents have also been identified with their clients' causes and subjected to harassment by the state, which has illegally restricted their access to clients. Some of the well-publicised incidents of state harassment targeted prominent lawyers such as Beatrice Mtetwa, Gabriel Shumba, Arnold Tsunga and Lovemore Madhuku. The legal profession has had to deal with the issue of how to speak out

against these government abuses in an environment in which elements of the judiciary and some senior judges have benefited from state patronage.

Another challenge the legal profession has had to confront is the state's attack on the constitutional principle of the separation of powers. The state or Executive has by granting itself excessive constitutional powers at the expense of the Legislature and Judiciary, destroyed the constitutional checks and balances that should exist among these arms of government. The state's erosion of the power of constitutional institutions has also had an adverse impact on the distribution of political power between political and economic elites and the general public. Power has completely shifted to the political elites, leaving the poorest sections of the public particularly vulnerable to abuse from institutions such as the police who are supposed to uphold the law and protect their rights. The unequal distribution of power and resources between various classes in Zimbabwe and between various levels of government has also highlighted the failure of the post-colonial state to transform the inherited pre-independence system of resource distribution between central government, the provinces, districts and local authorities. Post-colonial law has also sustained the imbalances that exist between rural and urban economies.

The legal profession has also faced the challenge of publicising and ensuring the Zimbabwe government's adherence to the regional, continental and international human rights and good governance agreements to which it is a signatory. These include the Harare Declaration (1991), which affirmed the Commonwealth's commitment to good governance and the Lome Declaration on Unconstitutional Changes of Government. The legal profession has also had to inculcate the democratic values in these continental and international declarations into popular Zimbabwean discourse about democracy.

The legal profession has in the past 5 years tried to deal with some of these challenges in a number of ways. Legal organisations such as the Law Society of Zimbabwe have taken the lead in trying to ensure that the legal profession conforms to its ethical standards through exercising judicial independence and ensuring human rights protection and adherence to the rule of law. The society has partly sought to achieve this goal by establishing collaborative linkages with regional legal organisations whose members operate in an environment with legal constraints similar to those in Zimbabwe.

Certain sections of the judiciary have, however, continued to give credence to the widespread public perception of a total loss of judicial independence by administering justice in a way that clearly favours the state. Some of the methods that have been used by these members of the judiciary include excessive delays in the issuing of judgements and failure to give reasons for judgements. These methods have been most conspicuously used in politically contentious cases such as Morgan Tsvangirai's legal challenge to the outcome of the presidential elections of 2002. Though the case was brought before the courts in April 2002, judgement was only given in June 2004.

The Media

The importance of a free media to the establishment and maintenance of democracy is widely acknowledged. Liberal pluralist theory on the role of the media has identified three distinct, but interrelated functions that the media should perform in a democracy or in democratic transition. The first is to act as a watchdog to powerful institutions, particularly the state. The second is to provide citizens with information and education that empowers them to participate in political and social processes and also entertains them. The third is to act as 'the voice of the voiceless' by representing all people.

In trying to perform these functions, the media in post-colonial Zimbabwe has faced numerous constraints that include legal restrictions imposed by an authoritarian state determined to prevent media scrutiny, the harsh economic environment, and unprofessional practices by some journalists and media preoccupation with publishing news that attracts the largest financial rewards. State-imposed constraints on legal freedom have included legal measures such as the notorious AIPPA and extra-legal measures such as the harassment of journalists and the bombing of the premises of private media institutions.

Over the past 5 years, the Zimbabwean media has, within the context of the national crisis, played three important roles. Firstly, in an environment in which the state-owned media has been transformed into a cheerleader for all state policies, the private media has played a fundamental role in challenging the official version of the Zimbabwe crisis. It has provided a platform for the expression of counter-hegemonic and alternative versions of the Zimbabwe crisis from across the spectrum of civil society, capital and even voices from the ruling party that have been sidelined by their party's dominant bloc. The private media's reporting on the Zimbabwe crisis, especially during the 2000 and 2002 elections, fostered both local and international awareness of the state's extensive violation of human rights.

Secondly, the private media has succeeded in placing the issue of media violations in Zimbabwe in the regional and international arenas. It has forged alliances with civil society groups championing media freedom and has successfully mobilised journalists and the international community to protest against the repressive media laws and the harassment of journalists in Zimbabwe. The consistent international pressure and censure that the government has been subjected to as a result of these efforts has possibly limited its assault on media freedoms in Zimbabwe.

Finally, Zimbabwean journalists in the Diaspora have established their own Diaspora media organisations. These include radio stations, daily news websites, weblogs and a weekly newspaper, the Zimbabwean, published in Britain and South Africa. This development, partly a logical consequence of Zimbabwe's profoundly repressive media environment has opened up new spaces for debate and news about Zimbabwe.

DIASPORA POLITICAL MOVEMENTS

The emergence of post- colonial Diaspora political movements and their modes of engagement with state authoritarianism has been strongly influenced by the economic turmoil and political repression that has characterised the Zimbabwe crisis since 2000. Millions of Zimbabweans have fled economic hardships and political persecution at home and settled in Southern Africa, Europe and the Americas. They have taken advantage of the freer political climate obtaining in these areas to establish Diaspora political movements aimed at achieving political change in Zimbabwe.

Since 2000, Diaspora political pressure groups have responded to the authoritarianism of the Zimbabwe state in several ways. Diaspora organisations such as the Association of Zimbabweans Based Abroad (AZBA) have, through a combination of internet based activism (e-mail, websites, etc.) and direct appeals, lobbied governments, continental organisations and international human rights groups to condemn and act against Zimbabwe's violations of human rights. Diaspora political groups based in South Africa have also lobbied the South African government, seen by many as an influential player in regional and continental politics, to take more decisive action to resolve the Zimbabwe crisis.

The open political climate in their host countries has made it relatively easy for Diaspora political pressure groups to establish alliances with international organisations and other pro-democracy civic groups. The resultant international advocacy around the Zimbabwe crisis has led to a better understanding of the situation in Zimbabwe. This Diaspora lobbying and advocacy has not only focused on the conditions of people in Zimbabwe, but on the mistreatment and bad living conditions that Zimbabweans in the Diaspora have been subjected to by some of their host nations.

Diaspora political groups have also drawn attention to the Zimbabwe crisis by organising peaceful demonstrations against the Zimbabwe government, especially in England and South Africa. Legal litigation is another strategy they have employed to try and influence events in Zimbabwe. The most recent example of this was the legal suit filed in the Supreme Court of Zimbabwe, by the Diaspora Vote Action Group (DVAG) based in England. The suit, filed shortly before the 2005 parliamentary elections, sought to overturn electoral regulations limiting voting outside the country to embassy officials and members of the armed forces. Although the Supreme Court dismissed the case, it served to draw international attention to Zimbabwe's uneven electoral field.

Zimbabweans in the Diaspora have also established Diaspora media institutions that have contributed significantly to the reporting and understanding of the Zimbabwe crisis. This media encompasses radio stations such as, Studio 7 and SW Radio Africa, daily news websites such as, Zimonline and NewZimbabwe.com and a weekly newspaper *The Zimbabwean.* This media has assumed greater importance in light of the Zimbabwe government's closure of the only independent daily newspaper,

The Daily News and its persistent refusal to grant operating licences to independent broadcasters.

In its totality, Diaspora political activism has opened up a new front in the fight for democratisation in Zimbabwe. The fact that the Zimbabwe government has on many occasions been compelled to react to either news items or political activities emanating from the Diaspora shows that it is a front it has been forced to engage.

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The reactions of non-party political actors to post-colonial state authoritarianism have been mixed. Some like the armed forces have been totally co-opted into the state's schemes to resist democratic change and bring all elements of society under its control. The various components of civil society have, for the most part, struggled under very difficult circumstances to either cooperate with the state in its developmental policies or to challenge the excesses of state repression.

STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF NON-PARTY POLITICAL RESPONSES TO STATE AUTHORITARIANSIM

This chapter considers the strengths and limitations of the strategies adopted by various non-party political actors in their interaction with state authoritarianism. Though the actors in civil society have shown different levels of effectiveness in confronting state-authoritarianism, they have similar organisational and tactical limitations. These include internal divisions, failure to meaningfully involve rural communities in their programmes and failure to formulate successful strategies to mobilise mass support.

THE ARMED FORCES

The armed forces' intervention in party politics on behalf of the ruling party has enabled ZANU PF to maintain its grip on power in the face of very strong and credible challenges to its political hegemony. It has also brought considerable economic and political benefits to the top echelons of the armed forces. The latter have been among the most conspicuous beneficiaries of the government's land reform programme. The armed forces have also increased their influence in the structures of both government and the ruling party. The benefits of the armed forces' alliance with ZANU PF have been restricted to the top levels. This is evidenced in frequent press reports on the rank and file armed forces' disgruntlement with poor remuneration and working conditions.

The most obvious limitation of the armed forces' decision to shore up ZANU PF is the adverse effect this has had on civil-military relations in Zimbabwe. The immediate post-independence mission, doctrine and training of the armed forces emphasised their role in protecting the people and in safeguarding the interests of the whole nation. This ethos has however been replaced by one in which the armed forces have come to view the people as their enemy and their principal role as being to protect the interests of ZANU PF. This has contributed to divisions and polarisation in Zimbabwean society by creating a situation in which the ruling party and the armed forces are pitted against the majority.

The professional image of the armed forces has also suffered immensely as they are now widely perceived as an oppressive institution sustaining the rule of a government that no longer enjoys popular support. Public revelations of the armed forces overt and covert role in the administration of election processes has also undermined public confidence in any ZANU PF administered electoral system as a vehicle for democratic change. The overall effect of the armed forces' intervention in party politics in support of ZANU PF is that they have lost legitimacy, and the confidence and trust of the majority of the population.

CIVIL SOCIETY

There are two salient shortcomings that have been shown by civil society in its engagement with state authoritarianism. The first is its failure to unite into one movement. Among the factors that have contributed to this lack of cohesion are intense rivalries that exist among the ambitious personalities

who head various civil-society organisations; especially those concerned with human rights issues. These personalities have pursued their own 'power' agendas and often maligned each other to potential donors as they compete for the same funds. The civil-society networks presided over by these leaders have also failed to mobilise mass support as they often comprise elite small groups of activists with no real grassroots organisational structures and support.

The second weakness shown by civil-society is its predominantly urban-centric orientation. Most civil society organisations have failed to extend their activities to the rural areas where 65% of the population lives. Even within the urban setting, the activities of civil-society groups centre too much on Harare despite the fact that 80% of Zimbabwe 's population is not resident in Harare. The regional offices of most civil society organisations are poorly equipped and barely functional. This excessive focus on Harare has led to civil society organisations failing to take account of the different experiences and requirements of the different regions. For instance, the regional position of Matabeleland has been strongly influenced by the state-sponsored atrocities that took place there in the 1980s and resulted in the deaths of an estimated 20, 000 people.

The Church

The limitations of the church's responses to the authoritarianism of the post-colonial state are numerous and tend to outweigh the strengths. One notable shortcoming has been the lack of cohesion and unity displayed by the church in reacting to state autocracy. This has undermined the church's effectiveness, especially as an agent for democratic change within an authoritarian state. Another significant limitation has been the church's policy of either endorsing or failing to strongly condemn the series of blanket amnesties granted by the state to perpetrators of human rights violations. This has contributed to the entrenchment of a culture of impunity for human rights violations as the state has become accustomed to granting amnesties without any significant opposition from the church. The church's weak responses to human rights violations have also been evident in the overly cautious approach it has adopted in trying to the call the state to account for massive human rights violations. The Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference (ZCBC), in an effort not to antagonise the government, delayed publishing evidence of the Matabeleland atrocities submitted to it by its own CCJP. It also initially resisted pressure to release this evidence to another organisation that was willing to quickly publish a report on the government-sponsored atrocities.

After 1980 the church, convinced that it had played its part in the liberation struggle, decided to leave the realm of politics to politicians and focus instead on social and developmental issues. This proved to be a disastrous error of judgement, which drew the church too close to the state and weakened its capacity to 'speak truth to power'. The church subsequently failed to recognise and speak out against the danger of ZANU PF's steady march towards authoritarian rule in the late 1980s. It also made it easier for the state to keep the church divided by co-opting certain sections of the church into supporting its policies. The success of the state in emasculating the church in

this manner is evidenced by the churches divided response to the government's violent land reform programme and its subversion of the rule of law from 1999 to the present. In addition, the church has failed to formulate an overall political and social vision based on Biblical values and which goes beyond the narrow visions offered by various social and political movements and groups.

The few strong points in the church's reaction to state authoritarianism emerged when it re-established a constructive role for itself within the political process by actively participating in the 1999/2000 national debates over constitutional reform. This constructive role was also displayed when the Church assumed a prominent role in giving humanitarian assistance to the victims of the government's *Operation Murambatsvina (Restore Order)*.

The Labour Movement/Trade Unions

The ZCTU's determination to resist authoritarianism and its ability to maintain its internal cohesion in the face of the fierce onslaught on it by the state has inspired other labour movements in the Southern Africa region and beyond. Organisations such as the South African Congress of Trade Unions (COSATU), the International Confederation of Trade Unions (ICFTU) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) have all expressed their solidarity with the ZCTU.

However, some of the tactics employed by the ZCTU in its struggle with state repression and economic decline have either not had the desired result or have created dilemmas which the labour movement has yet to resolve. Firstly, the ZCTU's prominent role in the formation and subsequent activities of the opposition MDC has created a number of problems in its internal structures and in the political and ideological dimensions of its relationship with the state. The formation of the MDC resulted in a 'brain drain' from the ZCTU as its most effective and experienced leaders left the organisation to provide the top leadership for the MDC. The leaders who remained behind lacked sufficient organisational skills and experience and this resulted in a leadership vacuum that became noticeable early in 2001 and has continued to affect the fortunes of the labour movement.

The ZCTU's close association with the MDC has also left it open to accusations by the ruling ZANU PF that it is a partisan organisation that does not represent workers of all political affiliations and that is preoccupied with political issues rather than the welfare of workers. These problems, which have contributed to the current stalemate between the state and the labour movement, have led to a continuing debate within the ZCTU over the degree to which it should align with the MDC.

Finally, the Labour Movement, in light of its weakened capacity to stage national strikes or 'stay-aways', attempted to change the direction of government economic policy by boycotting state-sponsored institutions such as the National Economic Consultative Forum (NECF) and the Tripartite Negotiating Forum (TNF). These boycotts have proved to be only an irritant to the government and have not led to change in its economic policy.

The Women's Movement/Women's Organisations

Lack of cohesion and unity about the strategies needed to achieve their goals has emerged as one of the principal limitations in the approaches used by women's organisations to pursue their interests within the context of post-colonial state-authoritarianism. The diverse social/class backgrounds and political allegiances of women have made the women's movement a heterogeneous site whose agenda is subject to constant internal contestation. Different views, strategies and opinions on how to advance women's interests have repeatedly surfaced within the movement.

Some women's organisations have favoured the strategy of pursuing their interests within state-controlled structures. Others have advocated situating women's movements and struggles outside the state. Some of these divisions were manifest in 1999/2000 when the Women's Coalition on the Constitution split into two camps along political lines. Both camps encountered difficulties within their chosen political alliances. Those who aligned with the state-led constitutional reform movement were often frustrated by the patriarchal prejudices against women that they encountered. Those who joined the more democratic NCA had to speak out loudly against gender imbalances within the organisation and campaign vigorously for increased female representation on its task forces.

One of the strategies employed by the Women's Coalition was to campaign across political divides for the election of female candidates the June 2000 parliamentary elections. Experience has, however, shown that it is not enough to have women in parliament. Numbers do not necessarily translate into gender equality, nor do they ensure that such forums are accommodating and receptive to women's interests. The Women's Coalition also overestimated its capacity when it decided to mobilise women to stand for election into parliament. When female parliamentary candidates became vulnerable to the widespread political violence that characterised the 2000 parliamentary elections, the Women's Coalition was unable to offer them support or protection.

The use of the Women's Coalition to politically mobilise women also placed enormous pressure on its constituent parts comprising specific women's organisations with diverse commitments. The ability of these different organisations to engage with the rapidly changing national political landscape was also constrained by their obligations to donors who did not want the beneficiaries of their funding to participate in party politics. These constraints contributed to reduced affiliation with and financial contributions to the Women's Coalition. The Coalition's ability to deal with the challenges generated by its diverse allegiances has been significantly undermined by its liberal human rights-based self-conceptualisation that has served to mask internal diversity. The glaring absence of discourses and discussions on internal differences reflects the Coalition's perception of itself as fairly a homogenous movement.

Though the strategies adopted by the women's movement in its interaction with state authoritarianism have not resulted in far-reaching transformation of

gender relations in Zimbabwe, they have enabled them to more clearly identify some of the complex obstacles to the successful achievement of their goals. The women's movement, despite its tactical limitations and a political hostile operational environment, has been able to reconfigure women's relationship with the state and with other sections of civil society.

The Legal Profession

In reacting to the authoritarianism of the post-colonial state, the legal profession, specifically the judiciary, had to choose between two different theoretical options, judicial positivism or judicial activism. Judicial positivism can be defined as a situation whereby a judicial officer relies on assumptions that non- judicial organs of the state have a superior capacity to make determinations of a quasi-judicial or judicial nature. On the basis of these assumptions, the judicial officer then absolves himself or herself of the responsibility to examine the basis for the determination. In contrast, judicial activism is based on the principle that the judiciary should play a fundamental role in monitoring the use of public power by ensuring that other state organs discharge their functions in accordance with agreed values and principles.

Judicial activism has often brought the judiciary into conflict with other state organs while judicial positivism has sometimes resulted in the judiciary passively colluding with the executive in undermining the fundamental rights of citizens. Historically, the judiciary in Zimbabwe has employed both judicial positivism and activism, displaying an ambivalence that has arguably emboldened the executive to extend the limits of its traditional legislative and administrative boundaries. The Court presided over by Chief Justice Anthony Gubbay largely employed judicial activism, but did so in a manner that left it open to unfair accusations that it was active only in matters concerning narrow sectional interests.

As a strategy with which to respond to the current state authoritarianism, judicial activism has four main limitations. Firstly, with the exception of criminal trials in superior courts, judicial officers largely work in isolation, with each being the principal of the court he/she presides over. This structure of the Zimbabwean courts militates against the revival and broadening of judicial activism. Secondly, the resources required to establish the ramifications of specific judgements and effectively monitor their implementation do not exist. In addition, the responsibility for monitoring the implementation of specific judgements is currently entrusted to non-judicial state organs and private parties.

The independence of the judiciary, which is one of the fundamental prerequisites for judicial activism has been subjected to profound and sustained attack by the state. Judges who fail to defer to the executive remain vulnerable to state reprisals. The independence of most of the judges who sit on the bench of Zimbabwe's Supreme Court is also questionable as they are prominent beneficiaries of government patronage. Judicial activism and the general character and capacity of the judiciary also depend on the quality of the constitution. Zimbabwe's essentially imperial constitution characterised by

extreme centralisation of power in the presidency at the expense of the legislature and judiciary, is a significant obstacle to judicial activism.

The Media

There are four main limitations in the media's approach to the Zimbabwe crisis over the past five years. Firstly, in reporting the current Zimbabwe crisis, both the state-owned and private media have failed to transcend the polarisation that has characterised discourses about the crisis. The state-owned media has uncritically endorsed the policies of the state and ZANU PF while the private media has sought to delegitimise the state and the ruling party by identifying itself with the views of the opposition MDC. This polarised reporting reflects the media's failure to problematise the constraints and limitations of the post-colonial state and the role of external players in state decisions.

Secondly, the media, especially the press has remained an essentially urban phenomenon with major newspapers failing to circulate beyond the cities. Mainstream commercial publications have failed to increase their circulation over the past 5 years. The state-owned media's rural newspaper rollout project initiated in the early 1980s has also not resulted in increased circulation of newspapers in the rural areas. Media density, which is vital for democratic life, has also decreased over the past 5 years and there are very poor prospects of this changing soon. The government has since 2003 used the draconian AIPPA to shut down 5 newspapers, including the *Daily News* and *Daily News on Sunday*. Although the government has increased its national broadcasting coverage in the past 5 years, it has refused to open up the airwaves to private commercial players and civil society.

Thirdly, the state-owned press has become totally partisan in its reporting of the Zimbabwe crisis. It has failed to claim the editorial autonomy it is entitled to in terms of the Zimbabwe Mass Media notarial deed of donation and trust (ZMMT). The state-owned Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) has also been unfailingly partisan in its reporting of the events in Zimbabwe.

Finally, journalist unions in Zimbabwe have failed to sufficiently lobby and fight for the media freedoms that are vital for the sustenance of democracy in the country. Despite organising several protest marches and launching a number of court challenges against AIPPA, the journalist unions have failed to establish a coherent strategy with which to fight bad media laws and policies. The task of challenging the state's draconian media laws has been left largely to the Zimbabwe chapter of the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA). MISA, however, lacks a solid local constituency and this has made it easy for the government to conveniently dismiss it as a front for Western interests.

The strengths in the approaches of the media to the present crisis are evident mostly in the private media, which, as already outlined in the previous chapter, has shown enormous courage in reporting the Zimbabwe crisis from what is arguably one of the harshest and most repressive media environments in the world. The numerous international awards given to

editors and reporters from especially the *Daily News* is a reflection of what the private media has been able to achieve in the past 5 years.

THE DIASPORA CIVIC MOVEMENT

As a strategy aimed at bringing about democratic political change in Zimbabwe, Diaspora activism has exhibited numerous notable weaknesses. Firstly, organised political parties and civil-society groups in Zimbabwe have made no serious effort to politically mobilise the Diaspora. The main opposition MDC, for instance, has made no meaningful attempt to draw Zimbabweans in the Diaspora into its activities through the establishment of active political structures outside Zimbabwe. Though the MDC has established branches in Johannesburg, London and the United States, these are either ineffective or dormant. The US branch of the MDC was recently condemned by the MDC leadership in Harare for doing almost nothing to mobilise support for the party in the US. The Johannesburg branch is renowned for its internal feuds rather than its ability to mobilise support for the MDC in South Africa. Moreover, few civic groups have made a recognisable effort to extend their organisational activities beyond Zimbabwe by establishing a regional office in Johannesburg.

Secondly, tensions have emerged between civic activists operating in Zimbabwe and those based in the Diaspora. The former, who perceive themselves as having an objective assessment of the Zimbabwe crisis rooted in its daily economic and political realities, have criticised Diaspora activists for being out of touch with the political reality on the ground. Diaspora activists have also been criticised for being cowards who have run away from the frontline of the struggle against authoritarianism in Zimbabwe. These tensions between the internals and exiles have, as in the case of other liberation movements, had an adverse impact on the productive interaction and exchange of ideas between the two groups.

Racial, class, ethnic, linguistic and regional divisions among Diaspora activists have militated against the formulation and implementation of a common programme of action. They have contributed to the failure by Diaspora activists to co-ordinate their activities and develop focused or coherent programmes of action that clearly define their goals and how they seek to achieve them. Many Diaspora groups have conducted uncoordinated activities within the same Diaspora communities. South Africa for instance has approximately 18 Diaspora organisations, all based in Johannesburg and competing fiercely and bitterly for the same political space.

Thirdly, Diaspora activism's excessive reliance on the internet to carry out its programmes has proved to be its greatest weakness. It has largely restricted political debate on Zimbabwe to those with access to computers and the internet. The majority of people in Zimbabwe do not have computers or access to the internet and have not been able to actively participate in the major programmes and debates initiated by Diaspora groups. The small numbers of people who have turned up for events reflects the failure of internet-based activism to attract mass participation from Zimbabweans in the dispora and even at home. This 'desktop' or 'keyboard activism' has reduced

the Diaspora struggle for democratic change in Zimbabwe to a talk shop as it has not been balanced by the use of other forms of activism.

The inadequacies of internet-based activism have been compounded by the logistical problems associated with mobilising widely dispersed communities. These include apathy from most Zimbabwean immigrants who are more concerned with daily issues of survival than with political activism. A significant number of Zimbabweans, especially in South Africa and Botswana are illegal immigrants on the run from the law and hence are reluctant to engage in organised political activities (Chetsanga & Muchenje: 2003).

The extent to which the political structures of host countries are willing to tolerate various forms and expressions of Diaspora activism has also had an impact on the effectiveness of Diaspora activism (Kondlo: 2004). Some host countries, especially in Europe and North America have offered considerable material and moral support to Zimbabwean Diaspora activists. Others, especially South Africa and some SADC countries have been reluctant to offer such support. This can be largely attributed to the Zimbabwe government's success in projecting the crisis in the country as a problem between the West and the Third World (Raftopoulos, 2005). This has made African countries wary of being labelled fronts for Western interests if they give open support to Diaspora groups fighting for political change in Zimbabwe.

Further, the material benefits offered by Diaspora activism have led, in some cases, to the emergence of briefcase Diaspora organisations headed by individuals for whom fighting for democratic change in Zimbabwe has become a lucrative personal industry. These briefcase organisations have no proper membership records or procedures of accounting for the funds given to them by donors. This lack of organisational integrity has had a negative impact on potential donors. In addition, some Diaspora groups have adopted foundational principles that have undermined the cause by attracting and accepting funding from conservative and reactionary groups.

However, the strength of Diaspora political activism lies in the way it has managed to keep international attention focused on the Zimbabwe crisis. The state's recognition of and determination to gain the upper hand in the cyber war that the Diaspora is waging against its authoritarianism is evident in draft legislation seeking to give the government wide powers of surveillance of internet usage and the content of e-mail messages.

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The lack of internal cohesion and unity, displayed by many of the non-party-political actors must not be seen as only a reflection of the internal cleavages in the organisations, but also a reflection of the enormous politically repressive pressure they have been subjected to by the state. That many of these organisations are still intact in the face of this onslaught perhaps indicates the inherent limitations of the authoritarian state's ability to totally suppress civil society.

FUTURE CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES FOR NON-PARTY POLITICAL ACTORS

The outcome of the struggles for democratisation currently taking place in Zimbabwe is still unknown. This chapter examines some of the major challenges that face the various non-party political actors in moving the democratic struggle forward as well as the strategies they can employ to overcome these challenges.

THE ARMED FORCES

The major challenges facing the armed forces revolve around the need to depoliticise their functions, restore their professional image and re-establish good civil-military relations. Some of the measures that need to be taken to transform the armed forces into a professional apolitical force include ensuring that the army does not participate in party politics and remains loyal to whatever government is constitutionally elected by the people of Zimbabwe. In light of the manner in which the ruling ZANU PF party has been able to co-opt the armed forces into a personal militia, legislation should be put in place that enables the armed forces to refuse to take unlawful and unconstitutional orders from the executive.

The restructuring of the armed forces needs to be implemented according to the guiding principles of 1980 which sought to redefine the mission of the armed forces and give them a truly national status through the following measures: revisiting their composition, recruitment methods and command and control structures; reforming their doctrine and training, re-examining their role especially in internal deployment into civilian posts and in operations such as *Operation Garikai/Hlalani Khuhle*; ensuring that public expenditure on defence and security does not starve other public services and productive sectors of the economy of funds; preventing the armed forces from influencing or determining the outcome of electoral contests between political parties and fostering cordial relations between the armed forces and all sections of society.

The successful reform of the armed forces is only possible in a context in which internal stability has been established through political reconciliation between the rival political forces in the country. This has been the experience in other countries such as Guatemala where a return to democratic traditions and good civil-military relations was preceded by internal political reconciliation.

CIVIL SOCIETY

There are several things that civil society needs to do in order to be more effective in its struggle against state authoritarianism. Firstly it needs to move away from the urban-centric focus of its activities and make a serious effort to operate in rural areas. It should seek to empower rural communities to stand up for their right to hold diverse views that may be in opposition to those held by the state. Part and parcel of this will be the shifting of resources to civil society groups that are centred in smaller towns and rural areas and provide

social support to a wider cross-section of people. Such groups include burial societies, church groups, shopping clubs and residents associations.

Secondly, legal and extra-legal restrictions on freedom of movement combined with the closure of the *Daily News*, which was the only independent daily source of events and opinions, has severely undermined the ability of civil society to disseminate information and initiate debate on important issues. In particular, access to rural areas has been further restricted by these developments. Though there is no simple solution to this problem, civil society needs to consider all options and find ways of promoting discussion and providing information, especially to rural areas.

Thirdly, both the opposition MDC and civil society have, since the deeply flawed presidential election of 2002, been debating whether it is worth participating in elections under the present conditions characterised by state-sponsored political violence and electoral fraud. Two camps have emerged whose conflicting views were most recently evident in the MDC rift over whether to participate in the senate elections of 2005.One camp argues that elections are the only effective way of bringing about democratic change in Zimbabwe. This group favours maintaining the opposition presence in parliament and continuing to participate in elections no matter how flawed they may be.

The other camp has essentially abandoned elections as a route to democratic change and advocates extra-parliamentary strategies such as mass action. Most of the major civil-society groups, such as the NCA and the ZCTU have aligned themselves with the latter camp. This camp has however failed to formulate and implement a clear and coherent alternative to participating in elections. Mass action has, over the past 5 years, failed to shake or dislodge ZANU PF from power. Those who favour continued participation in elections have also within their chosen battleground failed to come up with effective strategies and programmes to bring about change. Civil society needs to overcome these divisions and limitations by formulating and implementing a sustainable strategy to bring about non-violent democratic change in Zimbabwe (Raftopoulos, 2006).

Finally, civil society groups need to foster democratic practice and culture within their own organisations. Raftopoulos's insightful analysis of the complex internal politics surrounding the rift in the MDC has highlighted the ways in which opposition political parties can assume or replicate the authoritarian political culture of the regimes they seek to remove from power. The danger of replicating the political culture of the oppressor also extends to civil society that needs to avoid this by ensuring democratic accountability and divergence of opinion within their own structures.

The Church

The church has an important role to play in Zimbabwe's current and future struggles for freedom and democracy. In order to perform this role more effectively it needs to show more cohesion and unity in responding to state authoritarianism. It should also be less hesitant in confronting the state over

its perpetration of extensive human rights violations and its habitual refusal to ensure accountability.

The history of church-state relations in the post-colonial period has also shown the imprudence of any church decision to abandon the political realm to politicians. It has taken the shocking state abuses of the past 5 years, especially *Operation Murambatsvina (Restore Order)* for the church to make a serious effort to re-establish a meaningful role for itself in national politics. In performing this role the church needs to rise above the limited visions of Zimbabwe's democratic future offered by political parties and civil-society groups. It needs to come up with its own biblically based vision of democratic politics in Zimbabwe. The church, regardless of the specific strategies it may employ in its future interaction with state authoritarianism, needs to constantly show that it stands in critical solidarity with the victims of oppression.

The Labour Movement/Trade Unions

The immediate challenge confronting the labour movement is how to break out of the current economic and political stalemate that exists between it and the state. There are 4 principal measures that the labour movement needs to take in order to break out of the stalemate. Firstly, it needs to come to grips with the deepening economic crisis that has had a negative impact on its organisational capacity and militancy. However, it cannot on its own provide an alternative economic policy or programme to resolve the current crisis. What it can do is develop a blueprint for a future economic policy. There is already a precedent for this in the form of the labour movement's *Beyond ESAP* document produced in 1996. If this document is to be used as the basis of the labour movement's contribution to a future economic blueprint, it needs to be updated to take into account recent economic trends both nationally and internationally.

Another strategy that could contribute to the resolution of the current crisis is to revive and implement the concept of social dialogue. Though it is doubtful whether the authoritarian regime will voluntarily enter into a social contract without some pressure or promise of quick economic recovery, the social dialogue route remains important because the labour movement cannot pursue the broad agenda needed to break the stalemate in the absence of dialogue with other stakeholders, namely organised business and the state. The labour movement needs to convince these stakeholders of the urgent need for a social dialogue and also remind them of the objectives of the 2003 *Kadoma Declaration of Intent* where all the stakeholders agreed to prevent and fight corruption and to 'promote, observe and ensure good governance; openness and accountability.'

Secondly, the labour movement needs to grapple with the issue of whether it should align itself with political parties. While this would not be a significant matter in democratic and stable societies, it's an important one in the polarised political crisis of Zimbabwe. Specifically, the ZCTU needs to grapple with the dilemma of aligning or not aligning with the MDC. There has already been debate within the MDC over the degree to which the two organisations should be linked (Gwiyo, 2001). One side of the debate criticised some MDC

parliamentarians as opportunists who had used the labour movement as a 'stepping stone to greater heights' and who were now departing from 'bread and butter issues' that affected workers. However, the pros and cons of alignment need to be carefully weighed. If the ZCTU asserts its autonomy, they may have more scope to question some of the MDC's policies and positions. Maintaining a critical distance from the MDC may also be important in light of the current deep rift within the MDC. In the interim, the ZCTU should avoid aligning itself with either of the rival MDC factions in order to avoid reproducing this rift within its own structures. The ZCTU needs to handle divisive issues such as the split within the MDC carefully because it already faces formidable challenges of maintaining internal cohesion and unity in the face of determined state attempts to fragment the labour movement.

Thirdly, the labour movement has to confront three inter-related socio-economic issues namely - the land question, the HIV-AIDS epidemic and social protection. The labour movement needs to develop a well-articulated policy on the land issue in order to deal with the adverse impact of the fast-track land reform programme on workers. It also needs to examine how the AIDS epidemic has affected trade union capacity and press for greater availability of Anti-Retroviral treatment for workers. Furthermore, it should ensure social protection for workers by insisting on greater accountability in the use of public AIDS funds administered by the National Aids Council (NAC) and pension funds administered by the National Social Security Authority (NSSA).

Finally, the ZCTU needs to renew its leadership through democratic and transparent processes. Deepening and retaining the leadership skills in the ZCTU is crucial given the negative effect of the 'brain drain' into the MDC. The ZCTU should also focus on building alliances with other civil-society groups committed to democratic transformation in Zimbabwe. The history, membership, reach and skills of the labour movement makes it well-placed to be the focal point for the building of civic coalitions aimed at fighting against authoritarianism in Zimbabwe.

The Women's Movement/Women's Organisations

In order to more effectively carry forward their dual agenda of a women's struggle and a national struggle, the women's movement needs to conceptualise the state as a multiplicity of sites demanding that women adopt different strategies and actions to pursue their interests. The movement has predominantly viewed the state as an arbiter of development and a bestower of rights as evidenced by its emphasis on asking, challenging and appealing to the state to enshrine rights for women. This approach, which focuses on rights and legal reform, is, however, flawed because the struggle for women is not with the law per se, but with patriarchy. There is therefore a need to adopt strategies of action that do not focus exclusively on securing legal reforms and rights favourable to women.

The women's movement also needs to deal with the issue of whether to organise within the state or stay outside of it. The advantages and disadvantages that come with these two options has been the subject of much

debate internationally. Some commentators have argued that effective reform can only come through state instruments, while others have argued that the state co-opts women's issues. This co-optation is partially reflected by the ways in which new legislation that seemingly favours women has afforded the state - and not women - more power. Others have tried to come up with a synthesis of the two positions by arguing for a more pragmatic approach that entails working selectively with the state, while maintaining an awareness of its limitations.

In the case of Zimbabwe, it seems clear that the option of organising within the state is the one that carries the most disadvantages. The 1999/2000 constitutional reform debate in Zimbabwe shows how in the process of negotiation and engagement with the state, women's agendas were not only ignored, blocked and watered down by the state, but women themselves were also co-opted into state machinations through personal, professional or political allegiances and interests.

The women's movement also needs to reconsider the nature of its alliances with broader civil society. Though by its very nature, civil society in Zimbabwe is heterogeneous and includes multiple and competing agendas, one would expect that it would be a more receptive recipient and conduit of a gender agenda than the authoritarian state. This has not however been the case as broader civil society in Zimbabwe has failed to spontaneously protest blatant violations of women's rights as part of its articulation of democratic and progressive principles. The failure by women to perceive the heterogeneity of the interests, allegiances and identities within their movement has also hampered their effectiveness. The movement therefore needs to stop viewing itself as homogenous and encourage discussions on internal differences and how they can be accommodated in the movement.

The Legal Profession

There are three main strategies that the legal profession can use to enhance its effectiveness in confronting the challenges generated by the authoritarian state. Firstly, it needs, together with its Zimbabwean civil society partners, to collaborate with external partners to apply international pressure on the Mugabe regime similar to that which was applied to the apartheid era Botha regime. Organisations such as the Law Society of Zimbabwe have already set in motion the process of sharing strategies with regional and other counterparts on how to confront dictatorial regimes and hold them accountable for human rights and governance commitments made in various fora and international conventions. These efforts at collaboration, however, need to be nurtured and developed.

Secondly, the Zimbabwean judiciary needs to foster adherence to the constitution by clearly defining what obedience to the constitution involves and also establishing the benchmarks by which government can measure adherence to or violation of the constitution. The judiciary should also push for constitutional reforms, as the present constitution does not allow them to protect the rights of many groups from being violated by the state.

Finally, in light of the current government's ingenuity in using state patronage to subvert the rule of law and undermine the independence of the judiciary, there is a need for unity among the different elements of the legal profession to effectively define and respond to these and other challenges facing them. Internal unity and coherence in the legal profession has been undermined by the fact that judges do not have a representative body to discuss and advocate their collective concerns. Though lawyers and magistrates do have representative bodies, namely the Law Society of Zimbabwe and the Magistrates Association, formal linkages need to be established between these organisations.

The Media

In order to positively influence the direction of national politics within the context of the current crisis, the media needs to among other initiatives, widen its reach to include marginalised communities, improve on professional and ethical practice and engage the authoritarian state through multi-pronged strategies aimed at reforming the country's repressive media environment.

Broadening public participation and access to information has become very important since most towns and growth points in Zimbabwe mainly rely on state radio following the closure of the *Daily News*. The media therefore needs to widen its circulation beyond those areas that are already serviced by the mainstream press, radio and television. One possible way of achieving this would be through inter-media collaboration on distribution with different media organisations sharing the cost of increasing the circulation of news beyond the present boundaries.

The private media should foster a more professional and ethical image by avoiding uncritical endorsement of the policies of opposition political parties and the international community's solutions to the Zimbabwean crisis. It must look beyond ZANU PF's economic mismanagement and begin to problematise the nature of the post-colonial state, as well as support progressive forces in Zimbabwe across the political divide. In so doing, the private media will re-establish its relationship with marginalised groups and civil society (not necessarily aligned to the MDC) in the struggle for democracy equality and access to resources. The private media must also critique, the political economy of globalisation, 'smart sanctions' and other positions adopted by the international community in relation to Zimbabwe. Interrogating the positions of both the opposition political parties and the international community will enable the private media to avoid playing into the hands of ZANU PF, which has always characterised it as a mouthpiece of the opposition and an extension of foreign neo-colonial interests.

Journalists unions should also avoid being divided along political lines and adopt more coherent strategies to confront the state over media freedoms and other collective interests. This will entail changing the current situation in which unions, such as the Zimbabwe Union of Journalists and International Journalists Association of Zimbabwe have operated like briefcase companies because they do not have secretariats. It will also involve establishing a

national organisation for editors from both the state and private media. Effectively confronting the state over media freedoms and authoritarianism in Zimbabwe will require that the media not only broaden its alliances with local civil society groups, but also engages both South African and regional (SADC) governments and mainstream regional media organisations on the need for media reform in Zimbabwe.

Recent revelations about the involvement of the state's intelligence services in the ownership of the two *Mirror* publications and the *Financial Gazette* raises issues of media freedom violation and plunder of taxpayers' money by an unaccountable state. It also highlights the urgent need to ensure that media ownership in Zimbabwe is not shrouded in secrecy, but is transparent and a matter of public knowledge.

THE DIASPORA CIVIC MOVEMENT

The contribution of the Diaspora civic movement to struggles for democratic change in Zimbabwe can be significantly enhanced if both the internal and external struggles for democratisation are synchronised. There are three main strategies that need to be adopted and implemented in order to achieve this. Firstly, civic groups and political parties working for democratic change in Zimbabwe need to engage in a more sustained and organised campaign to mobilise the Diaspora. They can learn from some of the strategies adopted by other pre-independence liberation movements, to transform Diaspora activism into a formidable force for democratic change.

Secondly, Diaspora activists need to develop coherent programmes to mobilise mass support from Zimbabweans in the Diaspora. This will entail not only the convening of conferences and workshops, but also the devising of mobilisation strategies that are more inclusive and appeal to different groups within the Diaspora such as political exiles, economic exiles, undocumented illegal immigrants as well as those who have obtained citizenship in their host country. It will also involve balancing internet-based activism with other forms of activism and continuing to fight for the right of Zimbabweans abroad to vote in elections in Zimbabwe. Whatever programmes Diaspora groups develop, they will only be effective if they avoid internal bickering and ensure a high level of organisational integrity.

Finally, the success of Diaspora activism will require considerable financial and other resources. While these resources can be mobilised from non-Zimbabweans, the need for Zimbabwean contributions to this effort cannot be overemphasised. Diaspora groups need to continue international lobbying and advocacy on the need for democratic change in Zimbabwe. They should however focus their efforts on key African groupings such as SADC and the AU rather than on European and North American organisations whose interventions in the Zimbabwe crisis are more susceptible to being portrayed by the state as representing neo-colonial interests.

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Some civil society organisations have argued that non-state actors should be accorded a greater role in the resolution of the Zimbabwe crisis because the state and party-political organisations have failed to resolve this crisis (Sokwanele Report: March 2006). This argument, however, glosses over the fact that some civil society organisations in Zimbabwe are aligned with or share the organisational and other limitations of party-political actors. Opposition parties and civil society in Zimbabwe have both failed to develop effective and sustainable strategies to achieve democratic change in the country either through electoral means or through mass action. (Raftopoulos, 2006).

A much stronger argument for assigning a major role to civil society in bringing democratic change in the country is that democratic values cannot be introduced and sustained by merely replacing one ruling party or elite with another. There is a need to construct a new democratic culture at all levels. It is in this process that non-state actors or civil society will play a key role.

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