

ZIMBABWE BRIEFING

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From National Unity to Parallel Government: Understanding Zimbabwe towards 2011



FLASHBACK: President Mugabe (left) prepapers to take oath of office after being declared president in the aftermath of the June 2008 poll run-off. Morgan Tsvangirai (right) shows his exasperation at a press conference just before he announced he was pulling out of the June 2008 poll run-off. - pics: www.zimbabwepictures.com

THE GROWING animosity between President Mugabe and Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai is fast resulting in what Americans call gridlock in the Zimbabwe government. The usual Monday teas between the two principals have now been abandoned since they have little to talk about given the growing hostility. Cabinet meetings will still be attended by ministers from both parties and those from the Mutambara group, and so will the Council of Ministers meetings.

In short, the two major political parties are drifting further apart every day as the nation anticipates general elections come mid-2011. Meanwhile, the Committee of Parliament on the Constitution (Copac) is soldiering on with the futile exercise of drafting a democratic foundation law in accordance with the dictates of the global political agreement (GPA) signed by the three principals last September. With this sort of stalemate, what is likely to happen in the next few months in this beleaguered southern African country?

There is likely to be nothing new coming from the December consultative meeting of Zanu-PF. It is obvious that

Mugabe will once again be endorsed as that party's presidential candidate in the forthcoming elections. The usual hoodlums will, however up the ante by demanding that the old man be declared Zimbabwe's President for life at that meeting. We have already seen traditional chief do this at their Kariba meeting recently.

Not everyone in Zanu-PF is keen on this ridiculous demand, but those that are opposed to it will be too scared to express their views. There is probably more intimidation and fear in Zanu-PF than anywhere outside that former liberation movement. The party is likely to also make use of this meeting to strategise for the June 2011 elections, and the damaging indigenization and economic empowerment policy is likely to be that party's trump card.

Mugabe had categorically stated that the government of national unity (GNU) is not going to have its two-year life span extended. This means that the GNU will most likely terminate about mid-February 2011. Whether Copac will have completed the writing of the draft constitution or not, Mugabe is likely to dissolve the GNU and the

nation will revert to the old Lancaster House Constitution. The MDC ministers will all be dismissed from government and elections will then be called.

This will enrage the Tsvangirai faction of Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), which will run again to the dubious Southern African Development Community (SADC) to request for mediation. As usual, the regional body will drag its feet regarding that fallout. Violence is likely to flare up more fiercely after that, and many Zimbabweans will begin to leave the country again for safer places such as Zambia, Mozambique, Botswana and South Africa.

The national economy will begin to stagger like a drunken sailor, and the social sector will once again be plunged into chaos. The danger of a cholera breakout is very real as service delivery will collapse again as a result of the chaos. Sadly, dictators always benefit from a chaotic situation.

The international community will maintain the economic sanctions and travel restrictions currently affecting the country. This will

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Coordinator's Note

Senior ZANU-PF Official's Stupendous Wealth Exposed

LAST FRIDAY the state-controlled and ZANU-PF aligned daily newspaper, The Herald, carried a very disturbing article under the title: Chombo, wife fight over assets. What is shocking and disturbing about the article is not that senior ZANU-PF official and government minister for local government, Ignatius Chombo and his estranged wife are fighting over assets. It is the catalogue of assets that Minister Chombo has that is scandalous and outrageous, especially given that the majority of Zimbabweans are wallowing in poverty.

According to The Herald, Minister Chombo's wife has approached the High Court to be awarded 15 of the family's vehicles that include: Four Toyota Land Cruisers; three Mercedes-Benz vehicles; a Mahindra truck; two Nissan Hardbody trucks; one Toyota Hilux (Virgo) truck; one MADZA BT-50 truck; one bus; another Nissan Hardbody truck; and one more Toyota Hilux Truck.

Among the scores of immovable properties owned by the couple, Mrs. Chombo is also claiming: two Glen View (high density suburb) Houses; two Flats in Queensdale (medium density suburb); Stand Number 1037 Mount Pleasant Heights (posh low-density suburb in Harare); A property in Katanga Township (in the small town of Norton); Four business Stands in the town of Norton; three business Stands in Chinhoyi; four business Stands in Banket; one commercial Stand in Epworth, Harare; two residential stands in Chirundu; Four commercial Stands in the resort town of Kariba; one Stand in Ruwa (low density suburb in Harare); one Stand in Chinhoyi; two Stands in Mutare; two Stands in Binga; Four Stands in the resort town of Victoria Falls; one Stand in Zvimba rural; two residential and two commercial Stands in Chitungwiza; Four Stands in Beitbridge; twenty Stands in Crowhill, Borrowdale (the most expensive suburb in Zimbabwe where a Stand on average, costs US\$30,000); ten Stands in Glen Lorne (a very expensive Harare suburb); two Flats in Eastview Gardens, Harare (B319 and B320); one Flat in San Sebastian, Harare; House Number 79 West Road, Avondale; one Greendale House (posh Harare suburb); House Number 36 Cleveland Road, Milton Park, Harare; House Number 135 Port Road, Norton; two houses in Bulawayo; House Number 18 Cuba Road, Mount Pleasant, Harare;

House Number 45 Basset Crescent, Alexandra Park, Harare; two houses in Chegutu; one house in Glen Lorne, Harare; and two houses in Victoria Falls.

Further, Mrs. Chombo wants the High Court to share farming equipment at New Allan Grange Farm including three tractors, two new combine harvesters; two boom sprayers and two engines; cattle at Darton Farm, chicken runs, pigsties, a shop, a grinding mill, a house, six trucks and four trailers. Mrs. Chombo is also demanding cessation of shares in the family's ten companies which include Dickest, Hamdinger, Landberry,

Track in Security Company, interests in Mvurwi mine, hunting safari lodges in Chiredzi, Hwange, Magunje and Chirundu as well as properties in South Africa.

It is astounding that a mere government minister would amass such wealth, and it's rightly in the public interest for Zimbabweans to know the source of Minister Chombo's wealth. In the interest of transparency and accountability, Minister Chombo must immediately declare all his assets and how he got them

in order to rule out corruption. ZANU-PF, his party, has not made any public pronouncement over this outrageous revelation. The Anti-Corruption Commission should, forthwith, investigate the source of this public official's stupendous wealth.

We are fighting for a democratic society with a fairer distribution of wealth, and where corruption, cronyism and nepotism play no part. Political parties should not preach empty nationalistic rhetoric about the redistribution of wealth to all Zimbabweans when just a few individuals benefit. It is clear that in Zimbabwe the fight is not for the people, but for the protection and retention of ill-gotten wealth.

This may very well be clear evidence of the existence of a 'rentier' class in Zimbabwe that is focused on primitive accumulation of wealth without contributing anything to the economy. This parasitic class is sucking Zimbabwe dry while purporting to be custodians of a national revolution for the emancipation of the black majority. This is just the tip of an iceberg. Welcome to Animal Farm!

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Dewa Mavhinga

2011: Whither Zimbabwe?

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further infuriate Mugabe and his political party

The electoral campaign is likely to be volatile since Zanu-PF will resort to the abuse of the military, the police and its dwindling militia to whip the voters into line. Violence will simply be the order of the day.

Tsvangirai has stated that he will not participate in any violent election, and that means that he may pull his party out of the race once there is

adequate evidence of violence on the campaign trail. The result of an MDC pull out will be a meaningless election that no sane country will bother to recognize. Nevertheless, Mugabe and Zanu-PF will proceed with the farcical election and declare themselves duly elected. The MDC will do its best to dissuade the people from participating in the sham elections or to spoil their ballots. At the end of the day, the nation will be thrown back to the period before the 2008 elections.

SADC will once again try to negotiate another GPA and GNU (call it Round 2). It is very likely that Zanu-PF will refuse to co-operate this time, and the nation is likely to be in limbo for quite some time afterwards. There is even the possibility that the whole constitutional process might be abandoned prematurely.

- Professor John Makumbe, independent political analyst and senior lecturer at the University of Zimbabwe.

Victims of Political Violence Meet

AT LEAST 250 victims of political violence in Zimbabwe attended a summit hosted by Heal Zimbabwe under the banner Survivors Summit. This event was held towards the end of September. At the summit, the survivors came up with demands which were submitted to the Organ on National healing and Reconciliation and the Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs in the form of a petition for their attention and action.

Heal Zimbabwe is making serious follow ups on the petition in a bid to ensure that cases of political violence in Zimbabwe are redressed. These are the demands that were made:

We victims, with permanent injuries, victims of rape, relatives of those who disappeared during the political violence, widows and widowers of political violence, and those who were unlawfully detained several times, now therefore call upon the Minister of Justice and Legal Affairs and the Organ on National Healing, Reconciliation and Integration to:

- Set up an independent, transparent and effective Truth and Reconciliation Commission with a clearly defined mandate to investigate, prosecute and adjudicate on human rights violations and torture issues in all cases of political violence.
- Ensure that all perpetrators are held accountable for their crimes without amnesty to deter would be offenders.

- Come up with laws that criminalize unwarranted detention of people, torture and abductions.

- Force the police and the judicial to act impartially and professionally in the conduct of their duties.

- Force the Ministry of Justice to speed up political cases that are pending in courts so that justice prevails.

- Make sure that those who raped people during the violence period are prosecuted and given lengthy sentences as some were infected with the deadly HIV/AIDS and some were left with unwanted babies.

- Acknowledge that the majority of violations that took place were criminal according to the Zimbabwean constitution but politics was used as an excuse to avoid prosecution and therefore there is need for reported cases of violence to be investigated and for justice to prevail.
- Ensure equality before the law and all suspected criminals of political violence should be prosecuted regardless of their perceived or real political affiliation.



ABOVE: A victim caught in post election violence in Zaka (Masvingo Province) lies in a Chitungwiza hospital. pic - Zim-Rights

RIGHT: Part of the victims who attended the survivors' summit. pic - Heal Zimbabwe Trust



tion.

- Facilitate for and provide proper medication facilities to those who were tortured during the political violence period.

- Provide psycho-social support to the victims as many are still traumatised.

- Force Government to take full responsibility of the families of those who were murdered or who disappeared during the political violence period and provide for the sustenance and welfare of their relatives.

- Force the Government to pay for school fees for the deceased's children and provide those who lost their jobs during the era with employment opportunities.

- Force the Government to facilitate burial of some of the political victims who did not receive decent burial during the violence period.

- Come up with income generating projects for the survivors to boost their livelihoods as some lost their husbands and wives after the ordeal.

- Declare those who disappeared dead and launch an independent investigation team that will investigate the circumstances leading to the disappearances and bring the perpetrators to book.

• Force the perpetrators to publicly apologise to the victims' family and reparate both the spouse and the parents of those who disappeared.

- Enact legislation enabling for restitution to victims of political violence, for property loss, loss of livelihood, destroyed shelter and lost lives.

- Sitabile Dewah, Information & Research Officer for Heal Zimbabwe Trust.
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Political Stability Key to Investment in Zimbabwe



PAPER MONEY: These Zimbabwe Dollars were only enough to purchase a hamburger in March 2008. Insert: MDC-T President Morgan Tsvangirai is sworn in as Prime Minister by President Robert Mugabe in February 2009. - pics: www.zimbabwepictures.com

DEMOCRACY and political stability are essential elements that attract investment in any country, particularly in Zimbabwe, a country emerging from a decade of political conflict. The Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition calls business, academia and political leaders in South Africa to actively support efforts to democratize and restore political stability to Zimbabwe. For Zimbabwe to be open for business, it is necessary to have a robust and conducive political environment where there is respect for the rule of law, especially property rights, and certainty regarding investment protection.

We believe that lasting socio-economic development is founded on strong, democratic institutions and values of accountability, transparency, rooting out corruption and a political stability. The current power-sharing government dispensation in Zimbabwe has created some space for investment, and a modicum of stability. This has been achieved largely by Zimbabwe abandoning its domestic currency in favour of a multi-currency system and by bringing political opponents to work together in a power-sharing government.

A real risk remains, however, that these small positive changes may not be sustainable given that Zimbabwe's political environment remains volatile and unstable.

Talk of possible elections sometime in 2011 has revived extreme polarization in Zimbabwe. Major policy decisions are now taken on the basis of political expediency, and, ZANU-PF, the former ruling party led by President Robert Mugabe, continues to wield significant control over government macro-economic policy issues. Unlike South Africa and many other African States, Zimbabwe's security forces are now heavily involved in the country's political, economic and civilian affairs.

An elaborate patronage system led to endemic corruption, cronyism and nepotism and distorted rules relating to investment. In many cases, political connections are the only relevant factor to determine access to investment and business opportunities. We also believe that for Zimbabwe to once again be a prime business centre in Africa, there is urgent need to get the politics right. Get ye the political kingdom first, and all else will follow.

Corruption is so deep rooted in Zimbabwe partly because of patronage, but also because at present Zimbabwe does not have a robust, free, independent media with the capacity to investigate and expose corruption and other economic malpractices. Promoting basic

civil and political rights is therefore a key element of making Zimbabwe marketable as an investment destination. It is in South Africa, and the region's interest to have an economically viable and politically stable Zimbabwe.

Recent experiences of xenophobic violence in South Africa have shown that an unstable Zimbabwe adversely affects South Africa and the region. It is the South African taxpayer who pays heavily for the effects of political instability in its northern neighbour. Current efforts to regularise the stay of Zimbabweans in South Africa come at a huge cost.

But this is focusing on symptoms, and not the root cause of the problem. We urge the South African and regional business and political leaders to support initiatives aimed at finding a lasting solution to Zimbabwe's political conflict, and, by so doing, prepare Zimbabwe for business. This includes ensuring that Zimbabwe is sufficiently resourced to hold credible, free and fair elections where Zimbabweans freely express their will on who should govern them.

Following the establishment of a legitimate government of the people of Zimbabwe, installed by Zimbabweans, the country will be truly open for business.

Jo'burg school closure adds to anxiety

ALBERT STREET SCHOOL (both primary and secondary) in central Johannesburg, South Africa was temporarily closed early November on the instruction of the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for the department of education in gauteng, Barbara Creecy. The school was being run by the Central Methodist Church (CMC).

It has emerged that Creecy called the bishop responsible for the circuit, Peter Witboo on November 3 stating her intentions. The department of education then moved in the following day and addressed the staff members.

They announced that the church did not provide for suitable learning environment and all the students would be moved to the Sci-BonoDiscovery Centre in Newtown, Johannesburg where they will complete studies for the current term. CMC's staff members – most of whom are not registered with the department of education – are not allowed to be in contact with the school children for teaching purposes.

Several challenges are already being experienced as a result of the school closure. Students were currently preparing for the end of year examinations and this will most likely interrupt such preparations. Secondly, this means that the bulk of the students who reside in the inner-city will now have to walk an additional 2 kilometres to get to their new place of learning.

However, after concerted efforts from the school principal, Mr Alpha Zhou, a compromise was recently reached. The department of education will be providing transport for the students to and from the CMC and the staff members are now allowed to resume lessons with their students at Sci-Bono Discovery Centre.

The school authorities were also given up to the 10th of December 2010 to acquire a new and suitable place for the learners. If no place is identified by that date, the department will take over the school and distribute the students round the schools in the inner-city. This move is likely to backfire though.



FUN TIMES: Albert Street School students perform dance and music on the occasion of the institution's second anniversary in September, 2010. pic - www.zimbabweinpictures.com

The department of education has no schools in the inner-city. Perhaps the department needs to develop existing schools and help them attain the desired status and not close such schools down. Against the backdrop of the 1-Goal project, popularised during the Football World Cup tournament, closing down schools is counter-productive.

This is not the first time the Central Methodist Church, led by the outspoken Bishop Paul Verryn, has found itself on a collision course with the authorities. Last year, 344 refugees sleeping outside the church were arrested for loitering. But Zhou has described the recent decision by the department as fair. He says neither staff nor students were harassed unlike what happened last year in December, when the department of social welfare wanted to seize the students from the school authorities.

Yet, with the cut off date for the on-going documentation of Zimbabweans now looming menacingly, could this small story foretell the painful challenges ahead for Zimbabwean refugees in South Africa.

- Father Michael Nyamarebvu, Coordinator for the Solidarity Peace Trust
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UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

18-20 November:

Civil Society Consultations - Maputo, Mozambique

22-24 November:

Civil Society Consultations & Meeting with SADC Secretariat - Gaborone, Botswana

25 November:

Launch of 16 Days of Activism (Gender Programme) - Pretoria, South Africa

Launch of Zimbabwe Dialogue Series + Seminar - Johannesburg, South Africa

27-30 November:

Civil Society Consultations - Lusaka, Zambia

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