

## BOCISCOZ calls for Khama to ensure “enforceable roadmap” on Zimbabwe

The Botswana Civil Society Solidarity Coalition for Zimbabwe (BOCISCOZ) has come out in support of calls by the people of Zimbabwe for “an enforceable road map to the holding of elections 2011”. In a petition directed to His Excellency President Lieutenant-General Seretse Khama Ian Khama and dated, 9 June, 2011 and signed by representatives from the Botswana Council of Non-Governmental Organisations (BOCONGO), the Botswana Council of Churches (BCC), DITSHWANELO – the Botswana Centre for Human Rights, the Media Institute of South Africa (MISA-Botswana) and the Botswana Secondary Teachers’ Trade Union (BOSETU), the coalition notes “serious points of concern” given recent developments around attempts at bringing order to Zimbabwe.

“The arbitrary arrests of civil society activists and those suspected of supporting or being members of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC); the militarisation of civilian institutions which govern elections, party politicisation of the security sector; an unreliable and flawed voters’ roll, 23% of which contains the names of deceased persons and 2.5 million persons who do not exist; the disempowering and effective suspension of SADC Tribunal and the risk of limiting access of the individual southern African citizens to it, all are serious



**CALLED TO ACT:** Botswana president, Lieutenant-General Seretse Khama Ian Khama - sundaystandard.

points of concern,” reads the statement.

The Coalition further lays out key action points that Khama, through the government of Botswana must act upon. One, the coalition would like to see constitutional and electoral re-

forms before elections are held and also to see strict compliance with the SADC Principles and Guidelines on Elections.

Two, the government of Botswana is being called to “recognise that during the 2008 elections, the politically moti-

vated violence occurred before the arrival and after the departure of the election observer missions. There is a need for observers to be in situ at least three (3) months before the elections and to remain in the country for at least one (1) month after the holding of elections”.

Three, the coalition supports the establishment of an independent Electoral Commission which will only be reporting directly to Parliament. The issue of this body is one of the most outstanding issues in the Global Political Agreement (GPA).

Four, president Khama is to lobby for the return of the SADC Tribunal. Specifically, he is to “review and change its support of the position that the SADC Tribunal be inaccessible to individuals within the SADC region [because] limiting access to intra-state matters serves to weaken the rule of law within [the region].”

The fifth call is for “SADC to encourage the government of Zimbabwe to protect the people and safeguard the development of the region against instability arising from the breakdown of law and order in accordance with the SADC Protocol on Politics, Defense and Security Cooperation 2001, article 2 (a).

Lastly, the coalition encourages the “creation of true and effective reconciliation and healing within Zimbabwe”.

*By Levi Kabwato, Media & Communications Officer in the Regional Office.*

## Open letter calling for ANC to expel councillors and members involved in violence against foreigners

Att.  
ANC Secretary Cde General Gwede Mantashe

COSATU Secretary Cde General Zwelinzima Vavi

SACP General Secretary Cde Blade Nzimande

CC:  
ANC President Cde Jacob Gedleyihlekisa Zuma

ANC Provincial Chair Western Cape Cde Marius Fransman

ANC Provincial Chair Limpopo Cde Cassel Mathale

ANC Regional Chair Capricorn Cde Lawrence Mapuolo

**RE. Urgent Open letter calling for ANC to expel councillors and members involved in violence against foreigners**

Dear Cde SG Gwede Mantashe, ANC leadership and alliance leaders,

It has come to our attention that an ANC councillor has been implicated in the violence that lead to the brutal murder of a fellow African, from Zimbabwe, in Polokwane. This violence was shortly followed by the displacement of dozens of Zimbabweans. It is extremely concerning to us as, as there should never be any politician involved in violence, particularly xenophobic violence or senseless violence against foreign nationals from any other country, including Zimbabwe and Somalia. Using violence against foreign nationals to gain political

support is a huge danger and must be stopped immediately. We must recognize that when politicians take advantage of frustrations between different groups (national, ethnic, racial, tribal etc.) to further political agendas, it has had catastrophic consequences all across the world.

This is not the first time and nor will it be the last time. After the November 2009 displacement of over 2,000 Zimbabweans in De Doorns there were similar al-

**We humbly call upon the ANC to suspend any councillors involved in Polokwane’s senseless violence against foreigners**

legations against the local PR Councillor. In the same year Durban ANC councillor Vusi Khoza was arrested for his involvement in a “raid on foreigners” which resulted in the murder of two foreign nationals. During Khoza’s trial Zimbabwean national Eugene Madondo -- a survivor of the violence -- said Kohza, who was an ANC ward councillor at the time, was a “war general,” and had led the mob and instructed others to throw him out of the window.

This letter aims not to look back but to look forward. We are under no illusions regarding the complexities involved in dealing decisively with the councillors who perpetrate violence against foreigners; it is a sad reality that communities hold the perpetrators of xenophobic violence and violence against foreign nationals in high regard.

This latest violence is concerning to us as it occurred so closely to our recent, peaceful, and successful Local Government Elections. We have to ask: did this councillor undertake to “deal harshly” with foreign nationals during his election campaign? Sadly it seems clear that any councillors involved in such violence will not be held to account by their electorate, and thus we believe leaders must ensure quick, strong and fearless intervention.

There can be no room for leniency when dealing with these “grassroots” politicians if they have involved themselves in inexplicable behavior. If we allow for such conduct we could soon find ourselves facing other forms of populist hate crimes and violence in the months and years to come. We must realise that the same prospects for increased popularity can be found through the targeting of homosexuals, other races and tribes.

Such cheap politics must be nipped in the bud, before it escalates to uncontrollable levels. We recognize and welcome the statements by the SACP, the ANC and the speech by the ANC Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe -- all of which condemned this recent senseless violence.

We also recognize and welcome the efforts by government to run anti-xenophobia campaigns, particularly the establishment of the cabinet task team shortly before the end of the 2010 World Cup. It is our view that the efforts by Minister Nathi Muthethwa and the cabinet task team, supported by the police and SANDF, successfully deterred the rumoured “after world cup” xenophobic violence.

The ANC also led by example, holding protests against xenophobia in township communities such as Gugulethu to openly demonstrate that

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# Why Mugabe Should Step Aside Now

## Coordinator's Note



dewaMAVHINGA

Scholars of global politics will concur that a range of factors maybe responsible for triggering genuine democratic transition in a country. One such factor is the stepping aside of the person who acts as custodian or godfather of the old order. In the case of Zimbabwe, it is ZANU-PF leader and president, Robert Mugabe who embodies and represents the old order. Real transition to democracy maybe near impossible for as long as the godfather of the old order remains in charge.

For a new political order to sprout, Mugabe must step aside both in government and in his party to allow a younger leader to take ZANU-PF and the country forward in a new era of a multi-party democracy system where various political parties and formations co-exist and celebrate their diversity. In South Africa transition from an apartheid regime to multi-party democracy was only possible after P. W. Botha had stepped down and De Clerk took over to begin sincere talks about a different future for the rainbow nation. As article 20.1.8 of the Global Political Agreement (GPA) provides, if a vacancy in the executive arises during the subsistence of the GPA through, for instance, the stepping down of president Mugabe, then such vacancy shall be filled by a nominee of the party which held that post prior to the vacancy arising.

Therefore, president Mugabe can easily step aside and allow his party to nominate a president during this transitional GPA period while the

country goes through critical reforms to pave way for truly democratic elections.

Zimbabwe's experiences under the Global Political Agreement (GPA) and inclusive government dispensation that brought to the two MDC formations into government to 'share' power with ZANU-PF have shown beyond a shadow of doubt that, although certain spaces have been opened up, one cannot put new wine in old wineskins. Article 2 of the GPA, the declaration of commitment, affirms the parties' agreement 'to work together to create a genuine, viable, permanent, sustainable and nationally acceptable solution to the Zimbabwean situation... and to chart a new political direction for the country.' Such noble intentions, however, are yet to see light of day as the implementation of the GPA has been frustrated by diehard elements within. To paraphrase Mugabe's spokesperson George Charamba, 'there is a lot of smoke and noise in the kitchen, but very little cooking is going on.' The Old order and the new democratic dispensation are mixing like oil and water.

Remnants of the old order have tenaciously held on to their old ways and continue to frustrate any meaningful discourse about a new Zimbabwe where there is prosperity, peace, tolerance and respect for humanity. These parasites whose very existence depends on the continuity of the comatose, lethargic ZANU-PF regime will not accept the inevitability and reality of a new dispensation for as long as

their godfather is there and appears to be issuing commands from the front.

The second reason why president Mugabe should seriously consider stepping aside in the best interests of Zimbabwe is that he is way past retirement age in Zimbabwe. Although the office of the president is not specifically legislated, most civil servants retire at 65, putting Mugabe who is 87, some 22 years past retirement. Mugabe has been the Chief Executive Officer for Zimbabwe for the past 31 years, first as executive prime minister and then as executive president. In those three decades at the helm, one would believe, he gave his all to the country and now would be time for new ideas to take the country forward.

Last month ZANU-PF negotiator Patrick Chinamasa told the media in Namibia that Mugabe is ZANU-PF's strongest candidate for the post of president and that ordinary Zimbabweans should not be concerned about that. Well, that says a lot about the caliber of cadres and leaders in ZANU-PF. Leaders must never be misled to believe they are irreplaceable, or invincible, or divine or some other nonsense. But with some sycophants in ZANU-PF – from Obert Mpofu who, according to reports, famously signed off a letter to Mugabe as 'your ever obedient son,' to Didymus Mutasa who likened Mugabe to the son of God, there is little wonder there is this deep-rooted feeling that Mugabe is the future of ZANU-PF.

The third reason why Mugabe should step aside is compassionate. My

father lived to be 96. Together with my mother and my siblings, we had the task to care for and support my father in his old age, and believe you me dear reader, there is no escaping the realities and challenges associated with mortality and old age.

Even simple tasks that youths execute with ease become complicated and cumbersome. We took over and became responsible for the management of his small farm. He was very sensible and greatly appreciated that his sons and daughters whom he had schooled were now adults taking charge of affairs. He would often remind us that this was precisely the reason why he had invested heavily in our education, so that he could enjoy old age without a worry about the affairs of the farm or having to wake up at 5am to go to the fields to till the land.

President Mugabe should have put such a plan in place for such a time as this, so that younger leaders take over in seamless transition and give ZANU-PF a decent chance of survival outside a framework of violence, coercion or intimidation. Him alone, lonely at the top, continues to hold the reins. Imagine the schedule of a head of state and government, commander in chief of the defence forces and first secretary of ZANU-PF! Sometimes I feel sad and angry at ZANU-PF for apparent lack of compassion for their leader whom they continue to subject to long tortuous negotiations that often stretch far into the night. Shouldn't Mugabe, like any grandfather, be allowed to read folk tales and reflect on his days

three decades in office? Write a book or two perhaps?

The fourth reason why Mugabe must step aside now rather than later is to allow a smooth transition and leadership renewal within ZANU-PF. Not that I am concerned much about the ZANU-PF as a party in and of itself. Succession in ZANU-PF has implications on national stability and security. Like Nelson Mandela, Joachim Chissano, Kenneth Kaunda and Dr. Sam Nujoma, president Mugabe must step aside and ensure that his party continues to thrive while he is on the sidelines. There is no need to fear leadership renewal, if anything, it is much more dangerous to leave a vacuum than to deal with various factions that maybe interested in feeling Mugabe's shoes in the party now.

Without radical leadership change and renewal within ZANU-PF, it will be no easy walk to freedom. The numerous SADC resolutions being crafted, the Zimbabwe elections roadmap that has no timelines, and many other noble initiatives in the peace process, are likely to meet the fate of the GPA – a beautiful document that is not implemented. SADC leaders and regional liberation movements should, as a matter of urgency begin to engage with ZANU-PF and with president Mugabe with a view to ensure leadership renewal even at this twelfth hour.

**feedback:**  
coordinator@crisiszimbabwe.org

## Open letter calling for ANC to expel councillors and members involved in violence against foreigners

From Front Page

xenophobia is not something the congress supports. However, unless a politician suffers politically he/she will not be deterred from resorting to such reckless populism in the future.

We humbly call upon the ANC to suspend any councillors involved in Polokwane's senseless violence against foreigners, pending the outcome of investigations. If there is any conclusive evidence we ask that you expel them as soon as possible, as we cannot tolerate this reckless behavior.

We also appeal to the ANC to ensure that all its branches are engaged in Polokwane, not only to hear the members' concerns, but also to inform them that such behavior will not be accepted by the ANC. Furthermore, we encourage the ANC to ensure that the congress' newly elected councillors are educated on how to avoid violence, and to understand the ANC's condemnation of violence against vulnerable groups, including foreign nationals. Finally, we appeal to the ANC to suspend any and all of its members who are accused of encouraging violence against foreign nationals, and expel them if investigations produce evidence of their complicity.

### GIVE PEACE A CHANCE:

A poster outside the Rand Airport Camp in Germiston captured in 2008 following widespread xenophobic attacks in South Africa. -zimbabweinpictures.com



These loose cannons are tarnishing the image of the ANC and its affiliates. We ask you to intervene immediately, both to preserve the party's reputation as well as ensure the safety of the foreign nationals living within our borders.

Yours respectfully  
Braam Hanekom,  
PASSOP,  
Director

## UPCOMING ACTIVITIES:

- > 17th Ordinary Session of the African Union, Equitorial Guinea - from 23 June
- > UN Day Against Torture - 26 June

# Ubuntu. What Ubuntu?

South Africa is a country coming out of a very dark past. Its period of apartheid is one that the country wants to forget, but cannot be forgotten. Apartheid is one of the few crimes against humanity that are condemned internationally. It is a crime that forced the region and international organizations to assist the military movement in South Africa as well as to place sanctions against the country. Today South Africa is referred to as the “rainbow nation” because of its expected values of accommodation, inclusivity and dignity for all, among other things. Many have come from far and wide to assist South Africa to develop. Others have come to this country to seek opportunities and yet more have come to seek sanctuary from repressive and authoritarian regimes as well as war. Unfortunately, a significant number of these, especially those from Africa, have found in this rainbow nation only hopelessness, misery and intolerance. Intolerance comes in the form of homophobic and attacks, but I would like to focus on the xenophobic violence that the country is currently experiencing.

## Background

South Africa is not new to the scourge of xenophobia. Intolerance is firmly rooted in many of the country’s institutions for instance the police stations, hospitals and the hospitality and agricultural sectors, to name a few. It is important to distinguish this lack of tolerance, which has been there for a long time, to the xenophobic attacks through which this lack of tolerance found expression recently. It will be remembered that most of the attacks that this country has seen happened in 2008. They left 63

foreigners dead and over 30 000 displaced. Others were raped and had houses and the few belongings they had set alight. Towards the World Cup, there were attempts by some malcontents to re-ignite the violence, but thanks to swift government and civil society intervention, this did not occur at a wide scale.

This last week however has seen a resurgence of xenophobic attacks and displacements at an alarming level. Below I look at some of the disturbing reports received.

## Current Xenophobic trends and incidents

In recent weeks, shops owned by foreign nationals in Motherwell have been razed to the ground and yet others looted. This is not an isolated incident. Attacks have also been witnessed in Mamelodi in Pretoria this last month.

As I write, over three thousand Zimbabweans have fled onto the bushes to hide xenophobic attacks in Polokwane, while others have sort shelter at Seshego police station. The assault on the Zimbabweans came a day after Godfrey Sibanda was stoned to death by a mob for allegedly raping a five year old, committing murder and robbery. This is despite the fact that no police case has ever been opened against the deceased. Subsequent attacks in Extension 71 of Seshego have seen the torching of 6 RDP houses that had been rented to Zimbabweans.

On Friday the 17th of June, a Zimbabwean national was stabbed to death in Belmont Park near Cape Town in another xenophobic incident, according to the Daily Sun, a newspaper usually known for its negativity on foreigners in South Africa. Around the same time, two Bangladeshi

nationals were assaulted and stabbed while they slept in their shop in Botshabelo, Free State. Clearly, there is a serious problem of hate in South Africa that needs to be confronted head-on.

## Possible causes of xenophobia

A lot of reasons have been given to explain xenophobia in this country.

However, I think that it is not helpful for the government to keep blaming crime, while refusing to call the scourge xenophobia, which it is. If the government cannot accept that an attack is xenophobic in nature, it simply means that its intervention will not be adequate. In order to guide those who may not know what this animal is, xenophobia



is defined as deep-rooted antipathy towards foreigners (Oxford English Dictionary), or unreasonable fear or hatred of the unfamiliar especially people of other races (Webster’s Dictionary).

For what it is worth, here are my own explanations for xenophobia in South Africa. As said above, pre-independent South Africa suffered the crime against humanity called apartheid. This inhumanity degraded black, Indian and mixed race South Africans, thereby eroding the self-worth of many. This self-hate finds expression against easy and vulnerable targets such as Zimbabweans in much the same way as impotence may lead to domestic violence. Apartheid also cultivated anger and bitterness, among other things.

I don’t think that South Af-

rica has done enough to heal the nation in order to expunge some of these feelings that may find interpretation in attacks on those perceived in society to be lesser than those previously exploited.

Secondly, as far as the hate crimes are concerned, I think there is failure (in some cases motivated by xenophobia) to prevent impunity through effective prosecution.

Thirdly, I believe that foreigners in this country are the target of reckless media reportage, unscrupulous politicians and failed or aspiring business persons who have ascribed the socio-economic woes of the country to those coming into the country mainly from Africa, thus in the end fanning the fires of xenophobia.

On 26 May Patrick Rampai of Wolmaransstad submitted a letter to The Sowetan titled “Foreign Trad-

ers out of Townships.” In it he made the irresponsible comment that Somali businesses in this country are fundraisers for terrorist organizations and that they sell products that are “expired, unhygienic and dangerous for human consumption.”

In his response, Braam Hannekom of PASSOP (see front page) blames this “...unfortunate strong nationalist, right-wing views...” saying they are “...riddled with unfounded, baseless and misguided allegations...”

Unfortunately a significant number in this country harbour such views and they go unpunished. Likewise, there are politicians that have been implicated in the murder of Godfrey Sibanda and others, yet they have also not been brought to justice. PASSOP has this to say

about this sad state of events:

This is not the first time and nor will it be the last time. After the November 2009 displacement of over 2,000 Zimbabweans in De Doorns there were similar allegations against the local ward Councillor. In the same year Durban ANC councillor Vusi Khoza was arrested for his involvement in a “raid on foreigners” which resulted in the murder of two foreign nationals. During Khoza’s trial Zimbabwean national Eugene Madondo -- a survivor of the violence -- said Kohza, who was an ANC ward councillor at the time, was a “war general,” and had led the mob and instructed others to throw him out of the window.

## Calling on Conscience

I suggest that government calls an emergence all stakeholders meeting on xenophobia to find creative ways of preventing a recurrence of attacks. I also believe that it is not sufficient to deal with attacks only, but to also deal with policy, laws and practices that may enhance the xenophobic treatment of non-South Africans in hospitals and other places.

There is therefore an urgent need to implement recommendations by the South African Human Rights Commission post the 2008 attacks. I also recommend the crafting of a law that makes it hate speech to call an African an alien in this country, apart from criminalizing practices.

I suggest that there may be need for a special justice system in the mould of the world cup to deal with crimes of hate.

I end by observing that it is imperative for government to embrace civil society in any way forward.

*Gabriel Shumba, Executive Director & Human Rights Lawyer, Zimbabwe Exiles Forum (ZEF); gabmrech@gmail.com*

# Women as equal partners in Zimbabwe’s democratization process

**WOMEN** have for long been the cornerstone of society as they lead their families, clans and even organizations to dazzling heights! However, this has not been easy and in as much as the sisters would like to do more, there are still many challenges to them realizing their greatest potential as leaders and this has somewhat minimized their effectiveness as leaders at different levels. The lack of safe space, fear, harassment, sexual abuse and intimidation are some but not all of the reasons that have led to some of the women and youth not being actively involved in the democratization process of Zimbabwe. However, there is still hope and these special interest groups can still claim their space and contribute to making Zimbabwe a place worth living and rejoicing over. This can be done through standing in solidarity and supporting each other, making the space safe for them to participate and also through knowledge sharing and development.

Last week, I was chatting with a colleague on Facebook and he asked me why there seemed to be very few women who participate in the public space, especially in regards to Zimbabwe’s democratization process. It was something I had always thought about and a topic of concern and so as we tried to explain the reason why, I just thought it would be a noble idea to attempt to get the message out there of what could be the likely reasons why women and even the youth do not participate in the public space. The socialization process in Zimbabwe is such that men have

the upper hand and are authority in homes, at work and many other spaces. Patriarchy still dominates our very lives and since it is the “normal” call of the day that men should be leaders, it seems unacceptable when a brilliant woman becomes a leader.

In this regard, communities at different levels take this as rebellion by the woman and look at her with a critical lens. They scrutinize her abilities, marital status, and sexuality, how she becomes so powerful and all sorts of things are hauled at her. The space therefore becomes unsafe for not just this woman leader to participate for any other woman to want to be involved. There is need for you and me to work together and ensure that in whatever space that we are active in, woman are not sidelined but are respected for the human beings that they are. Just imagine, what would happen if women are given the rightful place to be the heart of this nation? Reflect on the lies that are ripping this nation apart, the mediation and negotiation processes and you name. Women deserve a chance to be the leader they are and Zimbabwe will be transformed.

Looking at the violence that defines Zimbabwe’s communities today and where harassment, rape and intimidation are the order of the day, it is no wonder women would rather care for their families than participate in the public choice. Women are faced with the hard choice between their own desires or caring for their families and when they weigh the options, it seems more likely that the public space is

not what they would want to be defined by.

Take for example the recent case of those arrested for murdering a police officer in Glen View...the women who are part of the group. When one looks at this case and how some of these sisters came to be incarcerated, it is shocking the reasons behind their arrest. It is no wonder when they begin to share their experiences; other women would rather retain their “normal” way of life and live the toyi-toying to others.

Every woman wants to keep her dignity intact and when we rape the sisters, harass them and intimidate them the way the Zimbabwean society does, they will not participate. It is possible to have them occupy such spaces by, making a difference in our respective spaces so that they too will participate. Let us not haul insults and discriminate against the women who show interest and have potential, let us be true to the cause of democratization and truly include women in all ways possible.

Let us not even think merit as if all the men that are occupying leadership positions are there by merit! Solidarity and support are key factors if women are going to become active in the mainstream space. You and I are the ones who can bring about transformation and ensure that more women begin to participate in Zimbabwe’s democratization process. When a woman loses her job for being intimately involved with some “big wig”, we can speak out and seek justice.

When you hear or even see women

being put down, it is your responsibility to respect human rights and fight for their cause and ensure that people are conscientized on the importance of having women on board. The change begins with you and me – in our organizations, personal lives and you name it, how are you ensuring that the space is conducive for women to participate as effective leaders or are you the one who joins the rest of the party in making fun of them. It is high time we make a difference in women’s lives and give them the respect they deserve. Let us get rid of all prejudices and other ill demises and ensure that woman have our support, we can make this happen right now, today and always and Zimbabwe’s civil society will be one with a difference and is defined by involvement and participation of all humans at the same level. Can you do that?

Women are a force to reckon with and it is important that they are involved in the public spaces. However, fear, harassment, intimidation, patriarchy and unsafe spaces have been somewhat responsible for their current lack of participation, however, there is still hope for women’s participation as each individual makes it their business to ensure that wherever they are, their mission is to ensure that the space is conducive for women to participate and participate effectively – not as an afterthought or some means of gender inclusion.

The responsibility is ours and everyone has a role to play, even you!

- By Grace Chirenje, an activist.