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Constitutional debate drift towards climax- which side should civil society take-

Within the next few weeks, Zimbabwe political players are likely to be finalising the draft constitution. The state owned, The Sunday Mail newspaper has restarted the debate on whether the constitution carries citizen views or not, accusing the drafters of ignoring 'peoples views' and copying and pasting the South African constitution on the proposed Zimbabwe new constitution. This has been ZANU PF's line of argument and is a precursor of what is to come from the ZANU PF side as they disparage the draft document in a bid to drastically change its contents.

ZANU PF's strategy is that people's views have been ignored and that, in its current state, the draft is unacceptable. Key issues for ZANUPF include protection of the land grab, denial of devolution and dual citizenship, and maintenance of two vice Presidents to keep ZANU PF's tribal balance of power and at the same time maintain the extensive and unchecked power of the Executive President. It was the latter issue that resulted in the people of Zimbabwe voting No against the 2000 proposed constitution. The tables have now turned and it is ZANU PF that does not want a new constitution or rather a new constitution with clauses not of its liking. ZANU PF will use its threat of rejecting the draft constitution to demand and get more. There is no doubt that the new constitution

will somewhat be agreed upon, the question is what will be sacrificed and would the new document make any meaningful sense to the citizens of Zimbabwe.

The discussions that are going to take place in the next few weeks are key in answering that question. The un-

cause it is not the best or should civil society make a decision to support this document as part of a transition document?. My take is that civil society and the citizens of Zimbabwe are caught between a rock and a hard place as a result of the monopolisation of key national processes by pol-

need to be addressed at a later stage when the people of Zimbabwe are truly free to write a people's constitution.

In essence civil society must make decisions on the historical moment and role of this document and how it can be used as part of moving towards a future, hopefully a better one. Civil society must insist and focus on key transitional clauses that allow citizens to participate in a free and fair election, allow some space for media and freedom of expression rights and give some powers to parliament to stop the shenanigans of the Executive. It is becoming a reality that civil society cannot expect much from this process, yet the process still has to be finished anywhere and something salvaged from it.

The debate on the constitution is going to intensify in the next few weeks, and instead of confusion there is need for a united voice from civil society on demands for a document that at the minimum allows society to move on. Civil society must not focus on its differences but points of similarity on those minimum constitutional reforms that allow for basic citizen rights to be respected and allow for a peaceful transition, until that time when a proper and democratic constitution can be written.

David RM Mutomba



democratic nature of our political system entails that civil society will not be part of the closed political horse-trading meetings. As already noted the final draft constitution will therefore be a negotiated political document not a people's constitution. The question for civil society is where to draw the line? Should civil society reject this draft again, be-

iticians. The leverage by civil to push their views and interests in the current constitutional discussion is next to zero, yet that is not going to stop the politicians from making decisions on the document and the future of the country. It is important for civil society to realise that this proposed constitution remains a transitional document. There remain issues that will

Inbrief, around Zimbabwe

PM Tsvangirai engages to Elizabeth Macheke

The Prime Minister, Morgan Tsvangirai earlier this week engaged his fiancée Elizabeth Macheke, a widow and daughter to a senior Zanu PF official.

President Mugabe and PM Tsvangirai attend president Mutharika's burial

Prime Minister Tsvangirai and President Mugabe yesterday attended the burial of former Malawi President Bingu wa Mutharika who was buried at the family farm in Thyolo district just outside Blantyre. Mutharika who was of the Democratic Progressive Party passed away early this month as a result of a heart attack and has been replaced in office by President Joyce Banda of the People's Party in a case of smooth constitutional transition.

Mugabe Preaches the Doctrine of Peace

In his Independence Day speech, President Mugabe continued with his call for peace, a call which has become a characteristic of his Independence Day speeches over the years. Similar calls in the past have not been implemented both in state organs accused of perpetrating violence and also at the grassroots levels. Violence by state machinery and Zanu PF militia groups such as Chipangano has continued and reports actually indicate that violence is on a steady increase with Mugabe's repeated call for elections.

Rifts in ZANU PF continue to widen

ZANU PF Manicaland Province is being rocked by infighting between rival parties belong to the Mujuru and Mnangagwa factions. The Manicaland Mnangagwa faction led by Mike Madiro is reported to have rigged the District Coordinating Committee elections in the province to ensure that candidates form their faction secure positions. Protesters gathered outside the Pro-

vincial offices demanding that the provincial office led by Madiro vacate office. This shows how the succession race in ZANU PF is intensifying. Meanwhile both Mujuru and Mnangagwa have both indicated that they don't have ambitions to replace Mugabe whilst reports indicate that Didymus Mutasasa has joined the succession race using Manicaland as his launchpad.

ZANU PF intends to reject the Draft Constitution

Zanu PF has indicated its intention to refuse endorsing the Draft Constitution, according to credible reports received. The draft constitution proposes among other things to scrap the posts of two Vice Presidents, ensure that appointment of service chiefs is by an independent body and also to impose term limits for the office of president. Through its spokesperson, Rugare Gumbo, ZANU PF has indicated that it will not endorse a constitution that bars Mugabe from contesting in a presidential election

and will not accept devolution of power to provinces, a position strongly advanced especially by the Midlands and Matebeleland provinces. According to COPAC only four issues remain to be finalized which are, citizenship, devolution, death penalty and land.

15 MDC-N activists arrested

15 members of the Welshman Ncube led faction of the MDC were arrested in Tsholotsho on Monday, the 23rd of April, and they are being charged with violating sections of the Public Order and Security Act. The activists were recruiting members for their party in the constituency that is represented by the controversial Jonathan Moyo in parliament.

By Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition Media Department

Zanu PF's Leadership Renewal Nightmare

Coordinator's Note 71



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When the December 2011 Zanu PF annual conference resolved to put forward its octogenarian leader Mugabe as presidential candidate for future elections it was perhaps the clearest indication that the party that has dominated Zimbabwe politics for the last three decades has dismally failed to tackle succession and leadership renewal. Current pushes for rushed, ill-planned elections under an uneven political field are directly linked to the succession battle in Zanu PF.

For a moment it appeared the succession issue would be carefully managed to allow Mugabe to hand-pick a successor, but recent outbursts from senior Zanu PF officials on the subject point to an ugly fight for succession which threatens to plunge, not only the party, but country, into chaos as people jostle to occupy the highest office in the country.

The media is partly to blame for failing to properly investigate and report on the succession issue, and sometimes for acting as marketing strategists for particular individuals with aspirations to succeed Mugabe. For instance, the portrayal of Defence Minister and touted front-runner in the succession race, Emerson Mnangagwa as a fierce strategist commanding support among the securocrats and Mugabe's right hand man maybe far from the reality on the ground.

It must be remembered that it was only in 2006 when Mnangagwa escaped expulsion from Zanu PF by a whisker following the so-called Tstholotsho Declaration where several Zanu PF leaders tried to defy Mugabe's choice of Joyce Mujuru as vice-president of the party and the country. Mnangagwa has repeatedly lost dismally in parliamentary elections in the midlands city of Kwekwe, putting in serious doubt his credentials as a national leader. And yet the media portrays him as the 'great crocodile' an astute and fearsome political actor set to take over from Mugabe.

In terms of party hierarchy, Mnangagwa is outside the top ten, making claims that he is set to take over hard to believe. In fact, the number five in Zanu PF leadership, secretary for administration, Didymus Mutasa recently dismissed Mnangagwa's presidential ambitions citing issue of seniority in the party.



Joyce Mujuru, vice president of Zimbabwe, [Zanu pf]

However, Mutasa compounded the confusion but tacitly declaring his own presidential ambitions.

Clearly, president Mugabe and Zanu PF lack a leadership renewal plan, perhaps largely because Zanu PF over-invested in the person of Robert Mugabe as its main asset, and also because Mugabe left the succession issue until too late.

tial ambitions.

The other main contender for Mugabe's post is the vice president Joyce Mujuru whom many perceive to have been severely weakened following the mysterious death of her husband, General Solomon Mujuru, in a fire last August. Last week Mrs Mujuru played down her presidential ambitions by declaring in Mugabe's presence that, 'while he lives, she

strategist professor Jonathan Moyo.

Clearly, president Mugabe and Zanu PF lack a leadership renewal plan, perhaps largely because Zanu PF over-invested in the person of Robert Mugabe as its main asset, and also because Mugabe left the succession issue until too late. Like all assets invested in, the law of diminishing returns will at some point, as it has now done in Zanu PF, kick in. This scenario raises two present dangers for Zanu PF: (1) The

to resolve the succession issue through rallying around a candidate acceptable within Zanu PF, within the country and within the international community. Such a candidate is not Chiwenga, or Mnangagwa; rather it is Joyce Mujuru. It has been said that the vice president is pragmatic and would find it easy both to renounce violence and to work with the MDC going forward. Business is comfortable with her. But president Mugabe stays mum on the subject. Last year he simply said dealing with succession now would be premature and could trigger a break-up of his party, so he is bidding his time. He hinted that his solution will be a surprise. Who knows, perhaps, after two years of tea every Monday with prime Minister Tsvangirai, he may have grown comfortable with his arch-rival to the point of effectively handing over the reigns to the MDC leader. Recently a

Zanu PF strategist wondered loudly what it is that Mugabe and Tsvangirai will be discussing alone in those Monday meetings. This is not a far-fetched scenario, only last week prime-minister Tsvangirai married the daughter of a senior Zanu PF official, and on a number of occasions Mugabe has publicly defended Tsvangirai.

The way Mugabe would effectively hand over power to Tsvangirai would be through allowing a smooth passage of electoral reforms including a new constitution, and having elections at the right time in the context of peace and non-violence as he indicated in his Independence day message last week. Mugabe himself has said, and we all agree, that in Zanu PF there is no leader who can emerge to defeat Tsvangirai in free and fair elections.

In the mean time, as part of salvaging his tattered legacy, Mugabe would also prepare Zanu PF for a long, peaceful life as political opposition. Of course the securocrats, who themselves want the whole cake to themselves, may already be aware of this possibility, and are sure to do everything in their power to thwart the plan. Whichever way one looks at the issue, leadership renewal is a nightmare for Zanu PF, and is potentially devastating for the country.

Dewa Mavhinga, Regional Coordinator, Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition



Robert Mugabe, president of Zimbabwe and Zanu pf leader

would not clamour for his post.' It is significant that she said 'while he lives.'

From the security sector side credible reports indicate that the commander of the defence forces, Constantine Chiwenga has a definite interest in being president of the country after Mugabe as evidenced by his postgraduate studies in politics and international relations and in his close working relations with Zanu PF backroom

party will perish together with its main asset – without Mugabe Zanu PF will not survive because it is not equipped to survive beyond Mugabe, and (2) If Zanu PF succession is not managed now, with Mugabe around, there will be utter chaos.

There is need for immediate steps to be taken to prevent a things-fall-apart scenario triggered by an all out war of succession. Various Zanu PF factions must unite together

Address Historical Educational Imbalances First

THE government recently launched a countrywide campaign to introduce e-learning in schools across the country. The project is reportedly a follow up to the schools computerisation programme of the past decade under which the president is reported to have donated at least 10 computers to all secondary schools. While the e-learning project is a brilliant idea in light of the increase in use of internet and other information and communication technologies in the last couple of years, its success throughout the country is likely to be impeded by the skewed level of development in schools among the country's provinces. Also, the success of the project could be impeded by the high levels of poverty in the country, especially in the rural setting and the failure by the government to adequately address the educational needs of vulnerable children



David Coltart, Minister of Education, Sport, Art and Culture, [MDC-N]

buildings and inadequate sports infrastructure. Some schools in the region even make use of Blair-toilets as they do not have water closets, not to mention the shortages of skilled teachers, furniture and other essentials.

How then are schools in the Matabeleland region expected to

the country wide computerisation programme have become outdated and obsolete, not to mention that they were never enough to support schools that have student numbers of over one thousand. One major problem with the computerisation programme was that it did not put to account the fact that most

that vulnerable and poor children get access to education. Statistics in Matabeleland for instance show that only about 50 percent of recorded vulnerable and orphaned children are getting assistance from BEAM. This means that thousands of children could be failing to go to school because of poverty. Such children would definitely not benefit from the e-learning programme that the government introduced recently.

It is imperative then that the standards of education in Matabeleland and rural areas should be improved to match that of urban areas in the country, before e-learning can be implemented in an equitable manner. Undergoing the project right now will further skew education standards among the provinces. The Urban areas in the country will be able to utilise e-learning to improve education standards while rural will have no use for

it as it is still battling with the basics that are needed in terms of education in the region. The contention here thus is that while e-learning is a noble idea that is relevant to the world as society moves deeper into the information age, the concept cannot be supported by backward education systems such as that which prevails in Matabeleland.

There is thus a need for the government to address historic imbalances in the quality of education offered by different provinces so that all children in the country truly have access to quality education in an equitable manner. Similarly, the government should ensure that vulnerable and poor children have access to quality education. After all, education is not a privilege, but a right that is entitled to all children regardless of race, tribe, economic status, religion or any other such delineations.

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What use will an e-learning initiative be to children who are failing to attend school due to poverty. The government has failed to cater for the educational needs of orphans and poor children as shown by the low reach of the Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM) which was designed to ensure that vulnerable and poor children get access to education.

While schools in the urban regions of Zimbabwe are well developed and have adequate infrastructure such as science and computer laboratories, suitable classrooms, sporting facilities, dormitories and favourable student to teacher ratios, schools in rural areas and mostly Matabeleland are the epitome of a failed education system. Years of marginalisation of the region, based on the antagonistic period of the early 1980s which was among other things characterised by the Gukurahundi massacres has meant that schools in the region are under-developed. In fact schools are basically non-existent in the region, especially in the rural areas, with children having to walk long distances to the nearest school and some opting to drop out of school altogether in favour of leading peasant lives, which has negatively impacted development in the region. The few schools that are found in the region are in a state of disrepair, with shortages of science and laboratory labs, dilapidated

find any benefit in the e-learning programme that the government has announced? It seems then that the programme is an example of a sterling project that is however of no use to the intended beneficiaries because the implementers have failed to adequately assess the needs on the ground. While the e-learning project may be useful in areas that have well developed and well equipped schools such as urban areas, it will be of no use in the downtrodden Matabeleland region and some rural areas in different provinces. What is needed in Matabeleland is the building of more schools and revamping of old schools that are falling apart. Matabeleland needs computer and science laboratories, maths and science teachers and adequate sporting facilities. Yes, the region needs e-learning too, but this would be impractical until these other needs are met.

It is pertinent to also note that most of the computers that were donated by the president during

schools did not, and still do not have computer technicians or computer studies teachers. Following donations, the computers were not well looked after leading to most of them breaking down as a result of computer viruses and misuse. The e-learning programme that the government has introduced will therefore be of no use as schools do not have the computers to run the software that the programme proposes to provide. In addition, how will school children who have never used computers be able to utilise e-learning methods?

Another pertinent issue to raise in this discourse is that of vulnerable children within societies. What use will an e-learning initiative be to children who are failing to attend school due to poverty. The government has failed to cater for the educational needs of orphans and poor children as shown by the low reach of the Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM) which was designed to ensure

Zimbabwe Election Scenarios

It is important to hypothesize on what might happen on the voting day and the subsequent period of announcing election results in order to better inform civil society plans in this watershed period in Zimbabwe’s political life. There are three possible scenarios I am advancing: Covert, Overt and Divert (COD):

Scenario A- Covert

Under this scenario the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) announces contested election results that favour incumbent, that is, president Mugabe and his Zanu PF party.

Scenario B- Overt

ZEC announces results that show that the incumbent has lost but the latter refuses to hand over state power (the 2008 March elections scenario).

Scenario C- Divert

In the sight of Mugabe and Zanu PF facing certain electoral defeat, ZEC operations are disrupted by unruly and extreme elements funded covertly by the Zanu PF elite.

What then is the strategy in case of each of the above scenarios?

PLAN A – Transfer of Power Campaign

In case of an overt scenario civil society must encourage the international community to:

- Pile diplomatic pressure on loser to concede power
 - Refuse to accept the incumbent’s victory
 - Officially recognize the winner as the legitimate President of Zimbabwe
 - Reject ambassadors seconded by an illegitimate regime
- Indict the election fraudsters in regional and international courts
- Plan B- Re-start Campaign



George Chiweshe, former Zimbabwe Election Commission Chairperson

If Divert scenario happens then the international community should be lobbied for renewed and justified calls for:

- Internationally monitored and supervised elections
 - Immediate deployment of United Nations peacekeepers
- Prevention of Mugabe from officially attending SADC, A.U. and international meetings till a credible election is held

PLAN C- Extension Campaign

If both A and B fail then there must be a lobby for extension of the GNU under a new model. Zimbabwe cannot afford a regression into a Zanu PF hegemonic grip on power. The international community must be lobbied to support another GNU, unfortunately based on the new parliamentary results. The reasoning is that the new GNU did not meet its mandate to de-

mocratize and Zimbabwe will slide back into civil strife, humanitarian crisis and consolidation of authoritarianism. The GNU will be meant to complete Zimbabwe’s unfinished business.

However, the GNU model must differ as the chief negotiators must include the representatives from the security sector and from civil society. There should be permanent international and regional monitors to ensure that the democratization business is completed this time. For the extension campaign to gain credence and favour other NGOs in Zimbabwe should have been able to prove too much violence and too much intimidation to render the poll unfree and unfair. Beneath that the pro-democracy family will be buying time for Mugabe’s inevitable exit due to age as he will be in his 90s. The pro-

democracy forces need to be in government as Mugabe gets into his twilight zone which will make it easier to maneuver in the event of his exit and afford more time to warm up to secularists. If the extension campaign is not in favour with grassroots then Plan D, to fight from without, comes into effect.

Plan D- Total Delegitimation Campaign

If Zanu PF successfully steals the vote or defies the winds of change, the pro-democracy family must embark on a Total Delegitimation Strategy (TDS). This will build on [massive regional advocacy in the pre-election period](#), the campaign period, the actual voting period, the vote counting period and period after announcement of results. This is why issues like parallel voter tabulation should be given due consideration.

Mugabe must suffer a political legitimacy deficit. He can gain legal power but suffer political legitimacy which will weaken his hold on power and this becomes worse as he will be in the twilight zone of his political life. In the wake of the total delegitimation campaign ZANU PF and coercive institutions will be much weaker in the next power game. It is important to acknowledge that Zimbabwe’s transition may be longer than anticipated and for it to be successful it requires consistent regional and international support and no room for fatigue.

By Phillan Zamchiya, PhD Candidate, Oxford, UK & Research Associate, Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition Regional Office

Inspirations from Tahrir Square

The 12th Association for Women’s Rights in Development (AWID) International Forum on Women’s Rights and Development was held in Istanbul, Turkey from 19 to 22 April 2012. I was thrilled yet humbled to participate in such an insightful platform for women’s rights activists, feminists and like-minded people from all over the world. One of the key themes over the four days was that of militarism, violence and conflict. Of special focus, amongst other areas, were the Arab and Mena regions. It was interesting how it seemed that the stories being told and shared were from the same areas, like whoever was speaking was expressing the narrative for women from all over the world. The young women from Egypt stood out for me, their story left me inspired!

The most critical factor they shared was that young women were at the very center of the Egyptian struggle. Their passion, their energy and dedication was evident in the HUGE numbers of these young women who turned out in solidarity at Tahrir Square. This demonstrated an era of young women who are politically conscious and who are desperate to have their country move forward. Above all, they all rallied together around this cause for they knew that there was comfort in their numbers. A key point to note is that some fancy donor did not give them any allowances nor were they lured to go out there to participate. It took a personal

commitment to the struggle for democratization.

particular women were not virgins, it is said that the powers that be then started spreading the word that the



Tahrir Square, Egypt, a picture taken during the beginning of the Egyptian protests. Pic by Ibitimes

Clearly this is still playing out and their work continues up to today. Can you learn anything from this example so far? Just think about it.

A story is told that a group of women were arrested and unlawfully detained – under inhuman conditions, with no charge and were abused whilst in the police custody. To make matters worse, they had to undergo forced virginity tests. Since these

women who were in Tahrir Square were prostitutes and the men were thugs. More harassment of activists then ensued and the brutality by the military was intensified. These Egyptians still stood and are fighting for their rights even as you read this. Nations belong to the very people who inhabit them and so they alone have the power to transform their living conditions. Until and unless citizens begin to work hard towards a

shared vision of transforming their nation themselves, then their level of commitment to the struggle of democratization and liberation is somewhat questionable and the possibilities for transformation remain rather slim.

As the young women shared their story around militarism, violence and conflict, it was clear that their narrative is as identical to many regions of the world as were present during the AWID Forum. What was inspiring was that the women present from all over the world were relating to these issues and it was clear that they too were moved to action in more ways than one. It is therefore important to note that as the curtain came down at the Forum, women from all over the world were energized to see change come to their living circumstances. They urgently wanted to and were impatient to see that they are part of the change agents and ensure that they return home and implement what they had learnt. Personally these insights inspired me to continue with the fight for democracy and keep focused. Militarism will live as long as the system of patriarchy exists and resistance in many ways will in a way ensure the beginning of a new era. No matter how long it may take, everything that has a beginning has an end whether naturally or not. Aluta continua Zimbabwe, the chickens will one day come home to roost!

By Grace Chirenje