

The Mbeki – Mugabe Papers

What Mbeki told Mugabe

These papers were passed to New Agenda confidentially. We publish them in the public interest.

Zimbabwe is confronted by a number of problems that require urgent solutions. For these solutions to be found, the first requirement is that the people of Zimbabwe themselves should define the nature of the problems that need to be addressed.

A correct characterisation of these problems is a necessary condition for their resolution. Failure to carry out this characterisation must necessarily lead to the adoption of wrong policies or the adoption of correct policies by accident.

The question must arise - who shall carry out the complex task of elaborating this correct and objective characterisation of the problems facing Zimbabwe!

Our view is that this task must be carried out by the party of revolution - ZANU-PF - which has the capacity both to understand the challenges facing all sectors of Zimbabwe society, and the ability to play the vanguard role in addressing the interests of all these sectors.

This Discussion Document is a humble contribution to the work that ZANU-PF must carry out. It will necessarily have all the deficiencies that emanate from the fact that it is the work of outside observers who can only make their observations from afar.

Nevertheless, we must make the point that the challenges that ZANU-PF has faced over the last 20 years are qualitatively no different from the situation we face.

We too have been and continue to be faced by the same imperatives and pressures. As the party of revolution in Zimbabwe had to, so must we also respond to these imperatives and pressures, which relate to the very reasons for which the masses of the people

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The First Phase of the National Democratic Revolution consisted in the struggle for national liberation from foreign and white minority rule and the establishment of an independent national democratic state.

Whatever the problems at the time, it would be correct to say that the successful conclusion of this phase constitutes a major victory of the national liberation movement of Zimbabwe, with ZANU-PF at its helm.

However, we must also observe that certain features of the First Phase were, and are, of great significance with respect to the **Second Phase** of the **National Democratic Revolution**. We refer here especially to the matters of white property rights and the relative autonomy of the state administration.

We will return to these matters later. At this stage, we would like to reflect briefly on the issue of the central tasks of the **Second Phase** of the **National Democratic Revolution**. These are:

- 0.0 ending poverty and underdevelopment especially among the formerly colonized masses;
- 1.0 bridging the disparities between the formerly colonised and the former colonizers in terms of wealth, income and opportunity and de-racialising the patterns of ownership of productive property;
- 2.0 ensuring that the economy grows and develops in a manner that can sustain the two objectives above;
- 3.0 further entrenching democracy by ensuring the greater involvement of the masses of the people in the system of governance, while ensuring the continued allegiance of the masses of the people to the party of revolution; and,
- 4.0 securing Zimbabwe's rightful place in Southern Africa, Africa and the rest of the world, bearing in mind the objective circumstances brought about by the process of globalisation.

How does Zimbabwe stand today with regard to these matters!

A revolutionary approach to this question requires that we should be as frank and objective as possible, informed by the well-established principle of self-criticism. Such analysis is also vital to the discharge of the task of characterising the nature of the problems confronting Zimbabwe.

What then, are our answers to the question - how does Zimbabwe stand today with regard to the central tasks of the **Second Phase** of the **National Democratic Revolution**!

Task I: After recording some progress during the early years of independence towards the accomplishment of this task, the situation has worsened and continues to do so. This affects both the rural and the urban masses.

Task II: After recording some progress during the early years of independence towards the accomplishment of this task, except for a relatively thin upper stratum among the formerly colonised, no significant advance is being made in this area.

Task III: After recording some progress during the early years of independence towards the accomplishment of this task, stagnation began to affect the economy, which is now actually contracting, resulting in a decline in living standards.

Task IV: There is a clear alienation of the masses of the people from the system of governance. This has expressed itself in the political actions of the people against the government as such, especially in the urban areas and Matebeleland. This has enabled the emergence of the MDC, which, essentially, is a multi-class and multi-sector protest movement. The disjuncture among the ruling party, the state machinery and the people is also expressed by evidence of corruption within the public sector and the desertion of large numbers of public sector workers to the opposition party.

Task V: For a while after independence, Zimbabwe occupied a leading place in Southern Africa and Africa as a force for change. With its policy of national reconciliation, it had shown the way as to what should be done to move from white minority rule to democracy, in a situation in which there was a substantial white minority. It had a strong and growing economy. It pursued progressive social policies with regard to such matters as education, health and rural development. It actively supported the struggles for the liberation of Namibia and South Africa, as well as peace and stability in Mozambique. It was accepted globally as an important player both in Africa and in the Non-Aligned Movement. Today it is viewed as a country in crisis, threatened by economic and social collapse. Many of the Western countries have turned against Zimbabwe, including the Scandinavian countries. Support in Africa is lukewarm and hesitant, while countries in Southern Africa are fearful of the consequences of a deeper crisis in Zimbabwe. Globally, it is presented as a negative factor in the context of the development of Southern Africa and Africa.

As we have indicated, Zimbabwe did not carry these negative features from the beginning of its existence as an independent country. On the contrary, it started on a positive note with regard to all these matters, i.e., as it began to tackle the tasks of the **Second Phase** of the **National Democratic Revolution**.

The question arises naturally - what went wrong! This also requires a frank, objective and balanced answer. Again, this is essential to the provision of a correct characterisation of the problems that Zimbabwe face today.

With regard to the issue of poverty and underdevelopment, Zimbabwe depended on both the public and the private sectors to address this question. As far as this concerns the private sector, this entailed almost exclusively the provision of jobs in the context of an expanding economy.

Important as this was, it was not directed at making a qualitative input to address this task. Rather, there would be a quantitative, cumulative contribution towards addressing this task.

In addition, this contribution would consist more of greater sums expended on wages and salaries as a result of larger numbers of people employed rather than in increases in real wages and salaries paid to those in the private sector.

A minimal private sector contribution to the accomplishment of this task can, of course, also be attributed to the emergence of a small black petit bourgeoisie as well as the expansion of the informal sector.

We can also say that the private sector played a minimal role with regard to the task of bridging the disparities between black and white.

Where this did take place in the private sector, it would largely be attributable to the

black role players within this sector, who would themselves be a minority within the sector.

The task to address these two central tasks of the **Second Phase** of the **National Democratic Revolution** therefore rested squarely on the shoulders of the public sector.

We must recognise the fact that during the first decade of Zimbabwe's independence, before the collapse of socialism in Europe, progressive forces throughout the world were influenced by the economic, political, social and cultural policies pursued in these countries.

These included doing everything possible to raise the standards of living of the working people. It was therefore natural that progressive Zimbabwe, which was also expected to demonstrate the success of non-racism as opposed to the apartheid disaster across its border, would itself do what it could quickly to improve the quality of life of the black majority.

Accordingly, to discharge its responsibilities with regard to the two tasks we have mentioned, the national democratic state of Zimbabwe depended almost exclusively on the state budget, supplemented by donor funds, as well as the various organs of the state machinery. The latter included the state corporations.

The programme that was implemented included:

- large expenditures on education, health and welfare;
- significant expenditures on rural development;
- subsidisation of essential commodities such as food and fuel;
- subsidisation of the state corporations to keep the prices of the goods and services they supplied down;
- training and deployment of black Zimbabweans in senior positions in all areas of the public sector;
- an upward adjustment of wages and salaries in the public sector to bridge the gap between black and white earnings; and
- a limited programme to encourage the emergence of a black rural and urban petit bourgeoisie.

We will now provide some facts to substantiate this conclusion. The information that follows is extracted from the document "Zimbabwe: A Framework for Economic Reform (1991-95)."

In the period 1980-89, primary school enrolments rose from 1.2 million children to 2.2 million.

Secondary school enrolment grew from 74, 000 to 671, 000, a "rate of expansion (that) was faster than (any) ever experienced anywhere else in the world." Increased health expenditures resulted in such positive developments as an increase in the proportion of immunised rising from 25% to 86% and an increase in life expectancy from 55 to 59 years.

Because of state interventions to encourage rural development, "the small farmers' share of marketed maize rose from zero in 1980 to more than 70% in 1989."

"The bulk of the additional formal sector employment during the 1980s was in the

governmental sector, especially in education, health and public administration. This was a deliberate effort to redress historical inequities."

With regard to the issue of price and distribution controls, the "Framework" document says:

"Until recently the government has maintained an extensive system of price controls in order (i) to ensure the supply of basic and essential commodities of consumption at reasonable prices, (ii) to ameliorate restrictive trade practices, and (iii) to secure remunerative prices for farmers."

At the end of the 1980s, a decade after Zimbabwe attained its independence, "strict controls" remained on ten products/services. These were bread, maize meal, beef, matches, cooking oil and fats, cement, steel, fertilisers, petroleum fuels and bus and railway fares.

This means that these products/services were supplied to the consumer at prices subsidised by the national democratic state.

This also meant that loss-making public enterprises had to be subsidised to ensure that they help to meet the objective of providing "basic and essential commodities of consumption at reasonable prices."

During the fiscal year 1990/91, the subsidies to the public enterprises absorbed a staggering 3.7% of Zimbabwe's GDP.

During the same fiscal year, the civil service wage bill accounted for 16.5% of the GDP.

Central government expenditure on the social sectors during the same year amounted to about 13% of the GDP.

Undoubtedly, the various interventions of the national democratic state to meet the needs of the people made an important contribution to raising the standards of living and improving the quality of life of the formerly colonised masses.

We can therefore say that the party of revolution did what it could to begin the process towards the eradication of poverty and underdevelopment and the elimination of the disparities between the formerly colonised and the erstwhile colonisers.

It is also clear from what we have said that many of the initiatives affecting the social sector necessarily included the expansion of the public service, including teachers, nurses and administrators.

This occurred in the context of the general dismantling of the racist-colonial state and its replacement by the national democratic state, requiring the expansion of the state machinery.

At the same time, because of the need to defeat the counterrevolution within Zimbabwe and to defend the national democratic revolution against the apartheid regime in South Africa and its allies in Mozambique, it was necessary to divert a significant portion of the state budget to issues of national security.

In the context of the task of bridging the disparities between the formerly colonised and the former colonisers, we must also mention some of the 'sunset clauses' agreed at the Lancaster House constitutional negotiations. These included:

- job security for those who had been employed in the Rhodesian public service;
- protection of their pensions and benefits, with the proviso that these, including severance packages, would be paid in any country or currency of the choice of the civil servant concerned; and,
- a virtual freeze on any land redistribution, to keep the most productive land in the hands of white landowners.

The effect of these 'sunset clauses' was to slow down the transformation of both the state machinery and property relations in the country, with these consequences having a direct impact especially on the task of bridging the gaps between black and white in terms of wealth, income and opportunity.

Politically, the erstwhile colonial power justified these arrangements on the basis of a set of principles agreed at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting held in Lusaka in 1979, which opened the way to the Lancaster House negotiations.

The particular principle to which we refer spoke of "black majority rule". This was expressed in the democratic elections of 1980 and the subsequent formation of a black government, to which Great Britain handed over power in the same year.

Of course, the obverse of this was "white minority rights", which found expression in the 'sunset clauses' we have mentioned, as well as other provisions contained in the Lancaster House Constitution.

It was within all these constraints that the Zimbabwe national democratic state sought to address the two tasks of the **Second Phase** of the **National Democratic Revolution**, of ending poverty and underdevelopment and bridging the gaps between black and white.

*The reality is that the programme, as it was implemented, proved to be unaffordable. The economy and the national budget could not carry the costs imposed on it by the requirement to respond to two of the tasks of the **Second Phase** of the **National Democratic Revolution**, of meeting the needs of the people.*

In a paper entitled: "The 'Millennium Economic Recovery Programme: Focus

on Poverty and Human Development Issues", Arnold Sibanda, Research Fellow at the Institute of Development Studies of the University of Zimbabwe writes:

"According to the CSO (1998) study, poverty in Zimbabwe increased from 40.4% in 1990/91 to 63.3% by 1995/96. The incidence of not being able to meet basic food requirements i.e. extreme poverty increased from 16.7% to 35.7% during the respective periods. In a pre-budget seminar in October 1999, the Minister of Finance revealed that 'poverty has increased sharply. Recent statistics indicate that 75% of all Zimbabweans are classified as poor and about 47% are classified as very poor.' (ZHDR 1999, 31-32.)"

This negative picture developed in spite of the determined efforts of the party of revolution to produce the opposite result of poverty reduction and eradication. It is precisely this situation that demands of this party that it undertakes a frank and honest assessment of what went wrong.

But as we have indicated, one of the things that went wrong was that the programmes adopted to improve the quality of life proved to be unaffordable.

Because the budget could not carry the burden of social expenditures focused on Tasks I and II of the **Second Phase** of the **National Democratic Revolution**, the national democratic state resorted to borrowing, to make up the shortfall in resources available to the government.

The "Framework" document presents this matter as follows:

"The central government's fiscal deficit was in excess of 10% of GDP during much of the 1980s and this led to central government debt reaching 71 % of GDP by 1989, 36% of which was external debt. Total public sector debt was even larger at 90% of GDP. In Fiscal Year 89/90 central government interest payments comprised 6.7% of GDP."

What this means is that the national democratic state financed part of its programme targeted at Tasks I and II with borrowed money. In other words, it did not have all the resources necessary to implement the ambitious programme it had set itself, of meeting the needs of the people in as short a period of time as possible.

As we can see from the preceding "Framework" quotation, ten years after independence, the level of borrowing resulting from the maintenance of a high budget deficit for a number of years, had imposed very high interest payments on the budget of the national democratic state.

By the end of the decade of the 1980s, these interest payments amounted to 6.7% of GDP!

It is clear that sooner or later, budgetary resources would have to be diverted to payment of this interest, away from the social expenditures that had resulted in the high borrowing requirement which, in turn, resulted in the large interest payments.

Put simply, in time the high budget deficit would necessarily lead to the collapse of the social services, which had occasioned the deficit.

What had seemed to be the fertiliser that ensured the growth of these services would turn out to be the toxic substance that would kill these services.

It is the impact of this borrowing requirement that would, in the end, oblige the national democratic state of Zimbabwe to turn to the IMF for help. It would create the circumstances that would lead to Zimbabwe having to agree to an economic structural adjustment programme.

It is appropriate that, at this stage, we also consider the third task of the Second Phase of the National Democratic Revolution. This is the objective of ensuring the adequate growth and development of the economy.

The "Framework" document reports that:

"Growth in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) during the 1980-89 period (2.7%) lagged behind population growth. Also a disproportionate share of this modest growth was in the provision of social services and public administration."

This means that even as the national democratic state was diverting ever-larger resources to meet the needs of the people, per capita income was declining because the economy was not growing fast enough merely to keep up with population growth.

The document goes on to say:

"Export growth overall... has been disappointing, increasing by only 3.4% per annum in real terms between 1980 and 1989. This slow export performance, coupled with debt service payments rising to a peak of 34% of export earnings in 1987, severely constrained the growth of imports. Imports actually declined by 0.4% per annum in real terms between 1980 and 1988. This contraction of imports, particularly during the mid 1980s, severely constrained utilisation of existing capacity as well as investment in new production capability."

Whereas the foreign debt that had accumulated required that the economy should produce the foreign exchange earnings to enable Zimbabwe to service this debt, the economy was not performing at a level that would enable this to happen.

This balance of payments constraint would also make it difficult to pay for the imports that were necessary for production activities to take place. It would therefore lead to a further decline in economic growth and consequently even less capacity to generate foreign exchange earnings.

Among other things, this downward spiral would oblige Zimbabwe to appeal to the IMF for balance of payments support, with the results that we have already mentioned.

Let us again quote (at some length) from the "Framework" document, which says:

"The principal cause of low growth has been the low level of investment in the productive sectors of the economy. Investment has been barely adequate to maintain the capital stock, let alone to increase it and raise productivity. The capital stock has aged, as gross fixed capital formation declined to 15% of GDP in the mid 1980s. Private investment has fallen even more rapidly, as the share of public investment in total investment has risen. Private investment was less than 8% of GDP in 1987 compared with 12% in 1985. This decline in investment can be attributed to three basic factors: i) the risks associated with unsustainable fiscal deficits; ii) uncertainties and high costs associated with the foreign exchange allocation system affecting access to investment, intermediate goods and spares; and iii) the relatively high cost of doing business in Zimbabwe's highly regulated business environment, as a result of price controls, labour market restrictions and investment control procedures."

One of the results of this low rate of growth was a decline in job opportunities.

The "Framework" document says:

"The increase in employment opportunities has been far from adequate to absorb the large numbers entering the work force annually, with the result that unemployment reached 26% in 1989. There are now about 200, 000 school leavers each year, but only about 20, 000 to 30, 000 new jobs are being created in the formal sector."

The document also deals with the macro-economic issues of inflation and interest rates and says:

"Inflation averaged around 15% per annum during the 1980s. Nominal interest rates averaged 12% and hence the real interest rate was negative. Nevertheless, limited consumer options and developed savings institutions helped to maintain a healthy savings rate of about 20% per annum. These savings, coupled with negative real interest rates and low private investment demand, allowed the central government to finance its fiscal deficits of over 10% of GDP without appearing directly to crowd out private investment and without foreign debt exceeding 57% of GDP."

What this means is that the savings made by the population were absorbed by the public sector to finance the budget deficit. Instead of these savings financing new investments in the productive sectors of the economy, they were absorbed by the government and used to finance the social sector expenditures which we have already discussed.

Accordingly, we can summarise the foregoing as follows:

I: during the first decade of independence, the party of revolution considered the redistribution of wealth in favour of the formerly colonised as one of its principal tasks;

II: accordingly, it ensured that the national democratic state intervened in the economy to divert resources to various elements of social expenditure, to meet the needs of the people;

III: this intervention also included the subsidisation of various consumer prices through the state budget as well as the maintenance and subsidisation of a relatively large system of state-owned enterprises;

IV: to finance this programme, the national democratic state relied on large public sector borrowing to finance a high budget deficit;

V: this public sector borrowing diverted savings away from investment in productive sectors of the economy into recurrent expenditure in social services and the state administration: at the same time, there was hardly any inflow of foreign capital into the country;

VI: at the same time and as a result of low levels of investment, the economy grew at very sluggish rates and regressed to a situation of stagnation, as a consequence of which it could not support the high social expenditures of the national democratic state: this signified that the party of revolution had failed to discharge its responsibilities with regard to the third task of the **Second Phase** of the **National Democratic Revolution**;

VII: to ensure that it met its objectives, the national democratic state maintained a complex system of government controls over the economy, which increased the cost of doing business in Zimbabwe and acted as a disincentive for investors who had the choice to invest in less regulated markets;

VIII: except for its intervention in the area of small-scale agriculture, the national democratic state made no serious effort to encourage the growth of the productive sector of the economy;

IX: increasingly, the redistribution programmes of the national democratic state could not be sustained by the productive capacity of the economy of the country, leading to a situation of crisis within both the consumption and the production spheres of the economy and within the public and private sectors;

X: ultimately, the national democratic state had to turn to the IMF to rescue it from the escalating general social and economic crisis, resulting in a structural adjustment programme which, certainly in the short term, could not but further deepen the crisis.

All this amounts to the reality that the party of revolution adopted a subjective approach to the accomplishment of two of the tasks of the Second Phase of the National Democratic Revolution. In pursuing these tasks, it did not take into account the objective reality of fiscal and economic constraints.

Soon enough, the national democratic state ran out of resources. This forced

the government of Zimbabwe to appeal to the IMF for assistance as early as 1984.

Motivated by the imperative to meet the needs of the people, the government of Zimbabwe has persisted for two decades in seeking ways of allocating as much budgetary resources to this objective as possible, without paying sufficient attention to the fact that the economy as a whole must have the capacity to produce these resources.

Fundamentally, this has amounted to a serious mistake of a subjective approach to economic questions. While this has been driven by the desire to serve the interests of the ordinary working people, in the end it has imposed new and heavy burdens on these masses.

For more than a century, progressive political economy has recognised the central importance of capital, the means of production, in the transformation and development of society.

For at least a century, the issue of the control of "the commanding heights of the economy", these being the leading sectors and corporations, was central to the thinking and actions of those who sought to build socialist societies of one kind or another.

In the light of the changing situation, especially characterised by the collapse of socialism in Europe, progressive political economy has been revising its views about the correctness and possibility of the state control of these "commanding heights".

As we indicate elsewhere in this document, this has resulted in the established socialist countries opening up their countries to private foreign direct investment. Accordingly, private capital is playing an increasingly important role in terms of the growth and development of the existing socialist societies.

At the same time, certainly in China, there is a simultaneous process to privatise many state corporations. This is based on the understanding that it is necessary to effect some departure from the concept of the state control of all commanding heights of the economy.

This is done in order to attract the capital into the national economy, which the socialist state does not have. It also seeks to use the competitive spirit in human society, characterised in socialist societies as socialist emulation, which leads the owners of capital to fight for such objectives as growth, competitiveness, development, technological development and market share.

As progressive political economy has moved away from the position of direct state control of the commanding heights of the economy, it had to grapple with the issue of how to deal with "the market".

Nevertheless, it has not lost its understanding of the central importance of the

role of capital as a critical agent of progressive change, even when it is privately owned.

It is within this context that the issue of 'policy framework and regulation' has arisen as an important issue of economic policy. Related to this, is the issue of the capacity and relevance of the state as the social instrument to discharge these policy and regulatory functions.

It is also accepted that whatever the adjustments within the context we have described, this does not necessarily represent the abandonment by the socialist state of its obligation to attend to its redistribution responsibilities in favour of the poor.

This means that the discharge of these responsibilities does not, in itself, dictate that the national democratic state should become anti-capitalist.

It does require that this state should play its role to ensure that the interests of capital, focused on profit maximisation, do not become the sole and predominant objective of social and national development.

To return to the issue of progressive political economy, we must emphasise that one of the critical issues of this discourse is the focus on the issue of capital, the means of production, whatever the mode of their existence and continuous expansion.

We make all these observations to say that in as much as the party of revolution must continue to concentrate on issues of poverty eradication, so must it also attend to the issue of the creation of the wealth without which these objectives cannot be achieved.

Accordingly, it is necessary that as a revolutionary movement we should work hard to understand the economy and economic processes. In this context, it is necessary to understand the distinction between the objective and the subjective.

The economy consists in a multiple series of interactions that take place independent of the consciousness of any particular individual. Economic activity is therefore an objective process.

This does not mean that we cannot influence this process through our conscious interventions. What it means is that for us successfully to make such an impact, it is important that we fully understand the 'laws' that govern economic activity, the regularities inherent in this kind of social activity.

Perhaps the most commonly cited economic 'law' or regularity is the so-called law of supply and demand. Understanding of this law enables us to make conscious interventions in economic activity to influence this activity to take particular directions.

The absence of such understanding would necessarily lead to interventions that may very well produce results that we had not intended. This would also

be the case if we thought that we could simply ignore this 'law' or that we could wish it away.

It is only when we have a proper understanding of objective reality that we are able to make subjective interventions that produce the results that we had intended. In terms of dialectical materialism, this has been expressed in the concept- "freedom is the recognition of necessity".

It is therefore imperative that the party of revolution of Zimbabwe should have a thorough understanding of economic questions in general and the Zimbabwe economy in particular.

It is only on this basis that it becomes possible to take correct decisions about what should be done so that the party of revolution continues successfully to discharge its responsibilities with regard to the tasks of the **Second Phase of the National Democratic Revolution**.

In this context, it is also necessary that the party of revolution should not fall victim to the understanding that the major and sole economic task of the national democratic state is the redistribution of wealth.

The party must also understand that this state also has direct and indirect responsibilities with regard to the creation of the wealth that it might then seek to redistribute.

It must therefore be continuously interested in building a strong and growing economy to provide the material base on which it can address the continuing and urgent question of meeting the needs of the people.

The bulk of the economy of Zimbabwe remains in white private hands. It is a capitalist economy dominated by people who belonged among 'the oppressor nation'.

However, these characteristics should not lead the party of revolution to treat these white capitalists as enemies of the national democratic revolution and state.

If this were to become the prevalent view, it would then be easy to arrive at the position that the task of the national democratic state is to punish these white capitalists by stripping them of their wealth, as much as possible, and to distribute this wealth among the formerly colonised.

To do so would result in the collapse of the economy with disastrous effects on the population as a whole, as would happen if, for instance, such white capitalists had no capital to invest to maintain and to increase production.

The reality that the party of revolution has to contend with is that capital in general (including 'white capital' in Zimbabwe), is central to economic growth and development.

Accordingly, the national democratic state has to treat capital as a social partner in the reconstruction and development of Zimbabwe, while recognising the fact that the relationship between state and capital will, to some extent, be characterised by the existence of contradictions between them.

It is urgent that the party of revolution should re-examine its approach to the third task of the **Second Phase** of the **National Democratic Revolution** so as to take the correct decisions that will lead to economic recovery.

We have identified the fourth task of this **Second Phase** of the **National Democratic Revolution** as the further entrenchment of democracy. We will now proceed to deal with this question.

At independence in 1980, the people of Zimbabwe saw the Patriotic Front, made up of ZANU and ZAPU as the only genuine parties of democracy.

Accordingly, in the elections of that year, excluding the reserved 20 white seats, the parties of the Patriotic Front (PF) won 77 seats while Mozorewa's UANC could only get 3. It was clear that the masses who elected the PF would welcome and accept the new national democratic state as their own.

15 years later, in 1995, these masses still had confidence in ZANU-PF. In that year's parliamentary elections, ZANU-PF won 118 seats to Sithole's ZANU-Ndonga's 2.

However, during the Presidential elections held the following year, 1996, only 32% of the electorate participated in the elections, which, nevertheless, were won overwhelmingly by the ZANU-PF candidate, Comrade R.G. Mugabe.

Of particular note in this regard, is the fact that the stay-away was highest among the urban working class and middle strata.

This stay-away should itself have been a cause of concern to the party of revolution. Like all parties of revolution, Zimbabwe's party of revolution depends on the conscious and mobilised masses both to defend the revolutionary gains and to take new steps further to advance the process of social transformation.

Accordingly, though the forces of opposition did not have any electoral gain from the low voter turnout, the party of revolution should have been concerned at the large voter abstention, as this signified the demobilisation of the masses.

Such abstention is not a neutral political statement. It can signify disillusionment with the party of revolution or complacency that so guaranteed is the democratic revolution and its gains, that they no longer need the conscious defence of the mobilised masses.

Events since the 1996 Presidential elections show that the voter stay-away, particularly in the urban areas, was not a neutral phenomenon. Rather, it

constituted the expression of the negative feeling of large segments of the urban population towards the party of revolution.

In February 2000, a draft constitution was submitted to referendum. The ruling party suffered a defeat, with the majority voting against the constitution, following a campaign by opposition forces that had emerged during the 1990's, which urged the people to oppose the draft constitution.

We should also note that apart from the fact that the party of revolution did not campaign seriously for approval of the constitution, again voter participation in the referendum was low.

During the parliamentary elections held in June 2000, one of the opposition forces, the Movement for Democratic Change, came close to defeating the party of revolution, nearly repeating the victory these opposition forces had achieved during the constitutional referendum.

With 48.6% of the vote, ZANU-PF won 62 seats. The MDC garnered 47% of the vote and 57 seats. ZANU-N won 1 seat.

In this regard, we must also note the MDC made its greatest advances in the urban areas and in Matebeleland. This means that ZANU-PF's support was strongest in the Shona-speaking rural areas.

As it analyses this massive loss of support, the party of revolution would have to assess both the class and the national questions as they express themselves in Zimbabwe. Various questions would have to be answered, such as:

- why has the party of revolution lost the support of the urban working class?;
- why has the party of revolution lost the support of the urban middle strata, including the intelligentsia and the civil service?;
- why has the party of revolution lost the support of the Ndebele-speaking population in both urban and rural areas?; and,
- how did the forces of opposition succeed to rally behind themselves the disparate forces consisting of the urban working class, the Ndebele national minority, the white urban and rural bourgeoisie and the white population in general?

We must also note that the opposition to the party of revolution had also been manifested in mass action when the urban working population responded to a general strike during November 1998, called by the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) to protest against various government policies.

In assessing the success of this strike, we must also make the observation that it was supported certainly by some of the employers who closed their establishments as an expression of their own grievances against the government.

Similar successful mass action took place during another general strike called by the ZCTU in June 2001.

Of particular concern with regard to these strikes is the fact that the protesting masses had also taken the political decision to turn their backs on the party of revolution. We make this statement on the basis of the historical determination of the revolutionary movement that, inherently, general strikes are political in nature.

We should take this together with the conclusions indicated both by the constitutional referendum and the 2000 parliamentary election results.

Later in this paper, we will return to an important matter that Zimbabwe's party of revolution must consider.

This is the question of a proper understanding of where Zimbabwe's class and national formations stand with regard to the issue of which, among these, belongs to the motive forces of the revolution, and which should be classified as objectively belonging to the camp of reaction.

For now, we must return to the question of the implication of the issues we have been discussing to the discharge of the fourth task of the **Second Phase** of the **National Democratic Revolution** – the further entrenchment of democracy in Zimbabwe.

In this regard, we must make a number of observations, based on conclusions drawn from political events in Zimbabwe in the last few years. These are that:

- judging by the results of the year 2000 parliamentary election results, almost half of the population of Zimbabwe has lost confidence in the party of revolution, even if this is temporary;
- accordingly, this section of the population no longer considers the democratic government and state as being social institutions that are committed to serve its interests;
- possibly the majority of state functionaries, and certainly a large number of those who occupy positions within the state machinery, feel no allegiance to the government and have lost any motivation to implement the programmes of the ruling party of revolution: it may even be that many of these public sector workers would feel inspired to undermine government programmes as part of their contribution to the political defeat of the party of revolution;
- the propertied class, the bourgeoisie, black and white and urban and rural, considers the party of revolution and the democratic state as being hostile to its interests: the section of this class that is directly dependent on the patronage of the ruling party would, naturally, continue to support the party of revolution;
- similarly, the urban petit bourgeoisie also considers the party of revolution and the democratic state as being hostile to its interests;
- the Ndebele national minority also considers the party of revolution and the democratic state as being hostile to its interests;

- similarly, the white minority also considers the party of revolution and the democratic state as being hostile to its interests.

What all this signifies is that large and important sections of the population of Zimbabwe have broken with the party of revolution, even temporarily, and lined up behind the forces of opposition. Once again, this conclusion is based on recent voting patterns and not any prediction.

As these masses seemed to lose confidence in the party of revolution and the democratic state, the party of revolution appeared to treat these masses as an undependable entity that could not be relied upon voluntarily to support the programmes of the party of revolution.

At the same time, those occupying important decision making positions within the state machinery began turning against the party of revolution and its programmes.

Ostensibly sharing the sentiments of those sections of the people that had lost confidence in the party of revolution and the democratic state, they acted to frustrate the implementation of the programmes of the party of revolution and the state, aimed at addressing the concerns of the disaffected masses.

Thus would they add to the further disaffection of these masses and therefore the political defeat of the party of revolution by undermining any action taken by this party to use the state machinery to regain the confidence of the masses who had ostensibly lost confidence in the ruling party.

Objectively, these actions would serve further to entrench the disillusionment of the people not only with the ruling party, but also with the national democratic state and the democratic system as a whole, whose leading political force is the ruling party of revolution. In these circumstances, it becomes impossible for this party further to advance the fourth task of the **Second Phase** of the **National Democratic Revolution**, further to deepen democracy. This arose directly from the fact that politically, the party of revolution had lost the support of significant sections of the population of Zimbabwe.

In this situation, it becomes impossible for the party of revolution to mobilise these masses further to take power into their hands within the democratic order and thus to become their own liberators from the scourges of poverty and underdevelopment.

The situation we have been discussing also reflects on the party of revolution itself.

This party must admit to itself that, in time, it has lost contact with the masses. It has failed to educate and mobilise the masses of the people to remain conscious actors for the defence and advance of the national democratic revolution and the success of a process of social transformation that serves the interests of the people as a whole.

As membership of the party of revolution translated into access to positions of employment, resources and authority, so did the structures of the party begin to atrophy and to wither away as representatives of the popular will.

We speak here of a phenomenon we have ourselves experienced already and which has been a problem common to other parties of revolution, certainly on our continent.

It would however seem that for two decades, from 1980 to 2000, the party of revolution took no steps to correct this deeply negative fundamental tendency. Rather, the more entrenched these tendencies became, the more the party of revolution depended on the state machinery to guarantee the support of the masses of the people.

Put crudely, the opponents of the party of revolution will argue that this party sought to use the fact of its being the ruling party to abuse public resources to maintain the allegiance of the masses of the people.

To give legitimacy to their cause, they will argue that this party sought to use state resources to bribe the people to support its cause. They will then argue that this occurred in a situation in which, objectively, these "bribes" were unaffordable.

The reality is that as the party of revolution correctly used state power to address the needs of the people, the material base to generate the means to finance this objective was getting weaker and weaker. The more the national democratic state sought to meet this necessary objective, the weaker the base became for the generation of the resources to finance this anti-colonial corrective measure.

What this describes is a situation in which the party of revolution had correctly decided that the political liberation of the masses of the people had to translate into the actual emancipation of these masses from the poverty historically imposed on them by the colonial system.

In this context, the disadvantage that the party of revolution will have to overcome is that its opponents will argue that this constituted the use of material means to win the allegiance of the masses. They will assert that this means that, by this time, the party of revolution had lost the power politically to inspire the masses of the people to act as a revolutionary force.

The forces of opposition will argue that the party of revolution sought to keep the masses on its side by treating them as being driven principally by individual material interests.

We know that, in fact, this is not true as the party of revolution has correctly continuously sought to remind the masses of the tasks of the national democratic revolution.

Nevertheless, according to the paradigm in terms of which all the masses are

interested in are their material interests, the national democratic state has an obligation to find the means continuously "to deliver", while the masses wait passively to reap the material gains due to them, which the state is obliged, and has the means to provide.

The danger would arise from any failure on the part of the party of revolution in Zimbabwe to contest this view. As the national democratic state sought correctly to address the needs of the people, this would be seen as acceptance of the legitimacy and correctness of this paradigm. The state would then be seen as seeking to live up to the demands of the paradigm, and would be seen by the masses of the people in this light.

This would mean that, continuously, it has to impose ever more exacting demands on the socio-economic structures of the country to produce resources that it could not in reality produce.

The more these structures could not produce these resources, the more insistent the demand became that they must produce everything that was required or face denunciation as forces of counter-revolution.

In this situation, the state machinery as an institution of compulsion becomes the principal centre of focus, while the structures of the party of revolution become of ever diminishing significance. This contributes further to their erosion and therefore their inability to mobilise the masses of the people to continue to act as their own liberators.

What this translates into is a weak party of revolution and a strong state.

Because the weakness of the party represents increasing alienation of the people from the party and the democratic state, the strength of the state expresses itself in and as the capacity of the state to use force against the people.

This stands diametrically in opposition to the achievement of the fourth task of the **Second Phase** of the **National Democratic Revolution**. Rather than advance the objective of the further involvement of the masses of the people in determining their own future and that of their country, it marks the abandonment by the party of revolution of one of its most fundamental tasks, the construction of a genuinely popular democracy.

Given the gravity of this development, we must consider its manifestations and consequences.

One of these has been the marginalisation by the party of revolution itself of its own structures and the erosion of democratic practice within its own ranks.

This is what has elevated the "war veterans" to the position they now occupy as the "true" representative of the revolutionary project in Zimbabwe.

What this has meant is that the structures of the party of revolution have themselves been marginalised by the party of revolution itself.

Because of this, the "war veteran" structures, are not subject to the processes of control and accountability binding the normal structures of the party of revolution. Accordingly, the "war veterans" have achieved a level of autonomy that further weakens the capacity of the party of revolution to influence and lead the masses of the people. Because they are not bound by the practices normal to a party of revolution, the "war veterans" resort to ways and means predicated on the use of force against the people, rather than the education and persuasion of these masses to support the revolutionary cause.

For these reasons, they also attract into their ranks the lumpen proletariat in particular.

This happens because sections of these declassed individuals are driven solely by individual material benefit and are accustomed to and accept the use of illegal force as a necessary element in their mode of existence.

Necessarily, the resort of the party of revolution to these forces, organised under the banner of the "war veterans", requires that it must permit of the defiance of the institutions of the national democratic state by the parallel, non-party structures represented by the "war veterans".

Inevitably, therefore, to the extent that it sustains these parallel structures, the party of revolution becomes an opponent of the democratic institutions of governance and democratic processes that it has itself established and encouraged and for whose establishment it fought most heroically, with many of its militants laying down their lives.

At the same time, to the extent that these parallel structures would be encouraged and allowed to act outside of the legal framework created by the party of revolution itself, so would it be important that the legal security organs of the state should be encouraged not to discharge their legal responsibilities to defend this framework.

Accordingly, they would act in support of the extra-party and parallel structures, the "war veterans", and against the enforcement of the legal order they are constitutionally and legally obliged to protect. It is out of all of this that government actions have taken place that have led to accusations about disrespect for the independence of the judiciary, the violation of the rule of law, the suppression of the right to freedom of expression and the independence of the media and the denial of the right to the people of Zimbabwe of their right freely to choose their government.

The party of revolution must ask itself the question whether, in fact, any of these accusations have any factual substance. It has an obligation to itself to answer this question frankly and honestly.

One of the reasons for this is that, in reality, the party of revolution in Zimbabwe should be the leading party of democracy in Zimbabwe.

To advance the democratic revolution, it should be the leading defender of the

independence of the judiciary, even as it works to transform this important institution of state. It should be the greatest protector of the rule of law.

It should create the greatest space for freedom of expression and the freedom of the press on the basis of the thesis - let a hundred flowers bloom, let a hundred schools of thought contend!

It should allow that all schools of political thought compete for power, confident that the party of revolution would secure the allegiance of the masses on the basis of its programme and its sustained success in addressing the concerns and interests of these masses, together with them.

The reality is that the party of revolution in Zimbabwe has allowed that the defence and advancement of this democratic project has seemingly passed into the hands of the political forces opposed to the party of revolution.

Whereas the democratic project is fundamental to the national democratic revolution itself, we are now faced with the situation that the leader of the national democratic revolution in Zimbabwe, ZANU-PF, is being projected as the enemy and the obstacle to the sustenance of this democratic project.

On the contrary, the forces opposed to ZANU-PF are successfully being presented as the true representative of the democratic order that Zimbabwe needs, that will enable the country to address the challenge of providing a better life for all its people.

As we have already indicated, the party of revolution in Zimbabwe must admit to itself that it has created the conditions for others to reach these conclusions.

Everything we have said indicates that, at this stage, it is not possible for the party of revolution in Zimbabwe to act in a manner that would ensure the further encouragement of popular democracy in that country.

Of critical importance in this regard are the issues of what the masses think of where their country is going and whether this is a future that will address their interests on a sustained basis.

These are the central questions that the Zimbabwe party of revolution must answer and communicate to the people of Zimbabwe.

Depending on these answers, it is possible for the party of revolution once more to mobilise the people of Zimbabwe to support both the party of revolution, its programme and the national democratic state, contrary to the outcomes indicated by recent election and voting results.

At the same time, it would be critically important that the party of revolution ensures that its actions speak louder than its words.

Apart from anything else, this would be essential to success in ensuring that

the masses of the people regain their conviction that the Party of revolution, and not its opponents, is the true representative of the will of the people and the true guarantor of a better life for all the people of Zimbabwe.

Until this happens, we must therefore accept that it will be impossible for us to achieve the centrally important goal of the entrenchment of democracy, without which it is impossible for the party of revolution to realise the objectives of the **Second Phase** of the **National Democratic Revolution**.

Immediately, our objective must be to re-confirm the party of revolution as the leading party of democracy.

Among other things, this means that the party of revolution must:

- distance itself from the violence and intimidation of the "war veterans" and related forces and practices; and,
- re-emerge as the greatest and most principled defender of the democratic institutions and processes it has itself put in place during the last two decades.

We must now proceed to discuss the fifth task of the **Second Phase** of the **National Democratic Revolution**. This relates to the place of Zimbabwe in Africa and the rest of the world.

For our purposes, we will not deal with all elements of this matter. We will refer only to relations with the developed world because of the problems that have arisen in this area.

As Zimbabwe ran into economic problems as indicated above, she had to turn to the IMF for assistance. The latter responded as it has done in similar situations by insisting on an Economic Structural Adjustment Programme covering a number of aspects of Zimbabwe's national life.

Accordingly, to gain access to IMF and World Bank funds, Zimbabwe had no choice but to implement this ESAP, requiring among other things, a cut back on the social expenditures of the national democratic state.

However, some of the public response of the party of revolution has been to take positions that have been critical of the IMF. There may have been nothing wrong with these positions.

However we mention this fact to make the point that these critical positions though in principle correct, created an atmosphere in which the IMF would naturally, itself, assume a more negative posture towards Zimbabwe.

Accordingly, this makes it necessary for the party of revolution to assess whether it is tactically correct to adopt this critical public stance, which, in general, may very well be strategically correct.

This is so because the objective situation is that the IMF is a centrally

important player with regard both to the global financial system and to the attitudes and activities of the developed countries of the North. Any negative posture the IMF assumes must therefore be an important matter, especially to the developing world, given its impact on the thinking and actions of the developed world.

The party of revolution has to take the necessary strategic decisions, bearing in mind the global balance of political and economic forces, about whether the national democratic state can afford an unfriendly relationship with the IMF at the same time as, in reality, it cannot do without support and assistance from the IMF.

It was in a situation in which the developed world of the North had already absorbed some negative perceptions about Zimbabwe that the confrontation with the UK over the land question broke out into the open.

There is no question that Zimbabwe must implement an extensive programme of agrarian reform, including land redistribution. We also agree that the UK has a responsibility to assist with regard to this matter.

The issue that the Zimbabwe party of revolution has to consider is whether it is correct strategically and tactically to end up in a confrontational position relative to the UK. The cold questions that have to be answered in this context include:

- whether Zimbabwe has the strength to confront and defeat the UK, considering this matter within the context of the global balance of forces and not only on the basis of the strength and commitment to principle of Zimbabwe's party of revolution;
- whether she is able to mobilise other forces globally, including the UK itself, to help her to achieve this objective;
- whether Zimbabwe is able to isolate the UK from its closest allies, these being the EU and the US;
- whether it is possible to persuade the developed world to contribute to the resolution of the land question in Zimbabwe, including honouring the 1998 pledges, in a situation in which the UK stands in opposition; and,
- whether the conflict on this particular matter of the land question is of such central importance that Zimbabwe is willing to sacrifice friendly relations with the developed world affecting all other questions.

As we indicated earlier, it is clear that this assessment would have to be carried out bearing in mind the international balance of forces.

One of the important features of this international balance is that the Soviet Union and other European socialist countries collapsed thus strengthening the global position of the developed capitalist world.

Among other things, this has obliged the developed world, including China, Cuba and Vietnam, to rely for their development on significant inflows of private capital from the developed capitalist world. This has also been

accompanied by the enhancement of trade and technology relations between the developing countries and the developed capitalist countries.

Indeed, in part, Africa itself has to depend on such relations with these countries to overcome the legacy of poverty and underdevelopment. The recent agreement with the G8 countries at their Genoa Summit is focussed precisely on this - the cooperation of these countries in ensuring the success of the African Recovery Programme (MAP).

During the post-Cold War period, the developed capitalist countries have also increased their political influence globally, resulting in the globalisation of their political positions as to the meaning of such political categories as democracy, good governance, human rights and the rule of law.

From all this, it is clear that, at this historical moment, it is impossible to mobilise the disciplined socialist and anti-imperialist forces it might have been possible to mobilise two decades ago, to act as a counterweight to the developed capitalist countries.

It is in this context that the party of revolution has to consider its own strategic and tactical positions with regard to how it deals with major players among the dominant forces within the developed capitalist world such as the UK and the IMF.

Of critical importance in this regard is the obvious necessity to ensure that Zimbabwe does not end up in a situation of isolation, confronted by an array of international forces she cannot defeat, condemned to sink into an ever-deepening social and economic crisis that would result in the reversal of many of the gains of the national democratic revolution.

It is also important that the party of revolution should consider its internationalist responsibilities to the rest of the Continent and especially to Southern Africa, given the reality that events in any one of our countries has an impact on other countries particularly in our region.

Earlier in this Discussion Document, we quoted from documents reflecting on the economic situation in Zimbabwe at the end of the first decade of the establishment of the national democratic state. We would now like to quote from other documents that reflect on the economic situation in Zimbabwe at the end of the second decade of the victory of the national democratic revolution.

In January this year, the IMF published its latest Country Report on Zimbabwe (No. 01/13). Below we cite some elements from the Fund's assessment of Zimbabwe's economic performance for the years 1999-2000.

"Zimbabwe launched a promising economic reform program in 1991 that was instrumental in liberalising and briefly stabilising the economy, but the momentum of adjustment was not sustained. As a result, per capita income contracted by an annual average of 1.4 percent during the decade. Faced with

serious pressures on the currency in late 1997, spawned by large and abrupt increases in war veteran benefits and uncertainties on the direction of land reform, the government formulated an adjustment program supported by the June 1998 (IMF) Stand-By Arrangement. Performance under the program was mixed, owing in part to a sharp worsening in the external environment, weaknesses in parastatal finances arising from delays in tariff adjustments, and the ripple effect on the financial system of a bank failure. Investor confidence was also jolted by the imposition of price controls on maize meal, continuing uncertainties about the direction of land reform, and the government's intervention in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) conflict from August 1998 onward. A new attempt at economic adjustment and reform under the aegis of a successor 14-month Stand-By Arrangement approved in August 1999 also turned out to be short-lived. The policy drift was aggravated in 2000 by new and unsustainable public spending commitments, election-related tensions, and output disruptions associated with the fast-track land resettlement program launched in June.

"In sum, the combination of wavering domestic policies, governance problems, and costly deployment of troops to support the DRC government has seriously affected economic performance and investor confidence since the early 1990s. Moreover, exogenous shocks, including intermittent droughts, terms of trade losses, and the fallout from the emerging markets financial crisis in the late 1990s also played a part. By late 2000, the country was in the midst of a serious economic crisis and was saddled with a sizeable stock of public debt and external payment arrears, while usable foreign reserves had dwindled and inflation was on an upward trend."

The Report illustrates the worsening social and economic situation by stating that:

"During the first seven months of the year (2000), manufacturing output fell by 11 percent from the same period a year ago and mining production by 14 per cent; also, a number of foreign airlines discontinued service to Zimbabwe, and tourist arrivals were down by 60 percent. As a consequence, thousands of rural and urban workers have been laid off and many firms have shortened the workweek... Inflation reached 61 per cent during the year ended October 2000...(The fiscal deficit stood at) 23 percent of GDP for the year...The combination of rising fiscal deficits and dwindling foreign financing has raised the government's domestic debt (including advances from the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe) from 19.5 percent of GDP at end-1998 to an estimated 29.3 percent of GDP as of end-September 2000; these factors led to the accumulation of some US\$500 million in public sector external payment arrears as of end-September, of which US\$204 million were owed by the central government."

In another Country Report (No. 01/05) also issued in January 2001, the IMF says:

"In the absence of a fundamental change in the policy environment, Zimbabwe is facing the prospects of a precipitous decline in economic activity,

hyperinflation, and a rapid deterioration in bank loan portfolios which, taken together, could trigger a financial crisis... Success in restoring economic stability will also hinge on the rebuilding of confidence through a speedy return to the rule of law and the implementation of an orderly land reform program that could garner domestic and international support."

The Report also points out:

"Zimbabwe's current difficulties have also had adverse repercussions on neighbouring countries, including pressures on the South African rand, disincentives to regional trade and tourism, and migration of workers displaced in Zimbabwe, and there was a risk of regional contagion if Zimbabwe's economy was allowed to melt down."

The Report also says:

"Due to the accumulation of arrears (owed to the World Bank), disbursements were suspended on May 15 (2000). A resumption of disbursements would be contingent upon clearance of arrears, and the scale of the Bank's subsequent reengagement will depend on progress in the following issues: (a) governance, (b) land reform, and (c) macroeconomic stability."

We must also note that in its own report of Zimbabwe's Transactions with the Fund, the IMF indicates that it made no disbursements to Zimbabwe in the years 2000 and 2001 (at June 30) from both its General Resources Account and the Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility.

We must add to this the fact that a number of developed countries and some donor agencies have begun cutting down development assistance to Zimbabwe. Additional punitive sanctions may also be imposed by the developed world, including the EU and the US.

It would seem obvious that the party of revolution should carry out a serious review of all these developments to arrive at concrete and realistic decisions aimed at pulling Zimbabwe out of its deepening crisis.

The reality of the situation we face is that:

- Zimbabwe is immersed in a deepening economic crisis marked by a steady collapse of the economy;
- this crisis is leading to the worsening of the conditions of life of the people;
- it is necessary that Zimbabwe takes all the necessary decisions, however difficult, resolutely to pull Zimbabwe out of this socio-economic crisis;
- more than at any other time in the past, Zimbabwe requires the support and assistance of the strongest economies in the world, those of the developed capitalist world;
- this developed capitalist world will make various demands on Zimbabwe as a pre-condition for its support; and,
- such is the situation in Zimbabwe and the balance of forces in Africa and the world, that Zimbabwe has very limited bargaining power in its

interactions with this developed capitalist world.

Politically, this creates a great amount of space for the domestic and international forces opposed to the party of revolution to organise the masses of the people against the party of revolution.

The recent political history of Zimbabwe demonstrates that, in varying degrees and for whatever periods of time, these masses will respond to the message and appeal of the forces of opposition.

In this context, the party of revolution must bear in mind that Zimbabwe has been independent for 20 years. In conditions of growing impoverishment among the people, it becomes impossible to mobilise these masses on the basis of the anti-colonial struggle, believing that this would be sufficient for them to sustain their allegiance to the party of revolution.

At the same time, the party of revolution must take into account the fact that many people across the world, including genuinely progressive and democratic forces, have already arrived at the determination that they are opposed to Zimbabwe's party of revolution.

The party also needs to take into account the material factor of "kith and kin", which convinced the British government of the day not to use force against the Smith regime when it carried out its Unilateral Declaration of Independence.

Without doubt, whether this is openly stated or not with regard to the land question in Zimbabwe, the elevation of property rights over the very right to life is driven in good measure by concerns about the future and fate of "kith and kin" in Zimbabwe and the rest of Southern Africa.

Essentially, those who have decided, internationally, that they are opposed to Zimbabwe's party of revolution, base this determination on the assessment that this party is anti-democratic, and therefore does not respect the rule of law, and that, equally, it does not respect human rights.

Accordingly, as part of this perception, these forces view and interpret both the leader of the party of revolution and the party itself as a force for dictatorship and the corrupt abuse of power for the self-enrichment of the leadership of the party of revolution.

Given the reality that these same forces control the means of communication, it is inevitable that they will succeed to communicate and entrench a view of Zimbabwe's party of revolution and of the national democratic state that is negative, as they have.

This view will inform the hostile global response to Zimbabwe that will not diminish in its intensity but will get worse. The truth is that neither the party of revolution nor the national democratic state has the capacity to defeat this offensive. Neither do they have the possibility to ignore it as being of no consequence.

The question that arises is what the party of revolution must do to respond to the challenges the national democratic revolution in Zimbabwe faces, including the obligation to continue to pursue the tasks of the Second Phase of this Revolution. We would now like to address this issue.

WHAT IS TO BE DONE!

The central strategic task facing the party of revolution in Zimbabwe is to re-establish itself among the people as the only genuine leader of the national democratic revolution and therefore a reliable defender of the fundamental interests of these masses and of their country.

This task has to be achieved in the context of the reverses that have taken place with regard to the party of revolution during the last two decades, which, among other things, have led to the birth of a strong, organised opposition to the party of revolution.

This means that the party of revolution has to engage in a serious political struggle to achieve its central strategic task, contending to regain the allegiance of the sections of the population that have become disillusioned with the party.

Among other things, this means that the party has to rebuild its structures, ensuring that they have the capacity to maintain contact with the masses continuously and to lead the process for the accomplishment of the tasks of the Second Phase of the National Democratic Revolution.

The party of revolution will also have to rebuild its image as a servant of the people, defeating any perception that may have developed of party arrogance and an authoritarian approach to the people and to the process of governance.

At the same time, it will have to advance the slogans around which the population as a whole can be mobilised to act together in unity to overcome the crisis Zimbabwe faces, to put the country on a new growth path and to ensure that she takes her place as a leading detachment of the forces engaged in struggle for the renewal of our continent.

The reason for these efforts is that the party of revolution has to regain its political positions such that it can carry out its tasks with regard to the further advancement of the national democratic revolution.

This raises the question of what social forces the party of revolution needs to mobilise to achieve the objective of the further advance of the democratic revolution. Naturally, the issue will also arise of how the party of revolution should approach each of these forces so that it succeeds to win them over to its side.

The party of revolution must therefore carry out a careful and objective

analysis to arrive at the necessary conclusions about what it must do in order to achieve its objectives.

For this purpose, the specific social sectors it must consider are:

- the rural masses in the communal areas;
- the middle strata in these areas, made up of the petit bourgeoisie and the professional stratum;
- the rural proletariat employed in commercial agriculture;
- the black urban proletariat;
- the black urban middle strata, including the intelligentsia and the civil servants;
- the Ndebele national minority in all its sectors; and,
- the white population in all its sectors.

In this context, the party of revolution must consider what place each one of these occupies objectively in the struggle to accomplish the tasks of the **Second Phase** of the **National Democratic Revolution**.

At the same time, it must consider the question of the subjective elements that will determine how each of these class forces, strata and national groups will act in the period ahead of us, during which the party of revolution must lead the process of the recovery, reconstruction and development of Zimbabwe.

Objectively, the reality is that all these classes, strata and national groups share a common interest in the successful achievement of the tasks of the Second Phase of the National Democratic Revolution.

This conclusion is of strategic importance to the party of revolution.

Objectively, these forces have the potential to support the party of revolution if it convinces them, by word and deed, that it has the conviction, the will and the capacity to lead Zimbabwe to realise the goals of the **Second Phase** of the **National Democratic Revolution**, with the support or co-operation of the international community.

Subjectively, it is only possible to move these social forces to support the party of revolution if, through its programme of action and its strategic posture and tactical activity, this party is able to convince each of these forces that it will actually serve their interests.

This conclusion, as well, is of strategic importance to the party of revolution.

What these conclusions mean is that the party of revolution is faced with the challenge and has the possibility to act as a revolutionary party of all the people of Zimbabwe. It has the possibility and task to reconstruct the national democratic state as a social institution that represents all the people of Zimbabwe.

This also means that the party of revolution and the democratic state have the

possibility to mobilise the majority of the people to join in a common struggle to liquidate the legacy of colonialism and racism that continues to confront both the party of revolution and the national democratic state.

This majority would include the white and other sections of the population of Zimbabwe that benefited from colonialism and racism, but understand that it is only the national democratic revolution that can serve their interests.

Correctly handled, the actions of the party of revolution have the potential to isolate the committed forces of racism in Zimbabwe society and thus ensure their final historic defeat. Critical to this victory is the permanent isolation of the most backward forces from their natural, historical base.

This base is the minority of the population of Zimbabwe that benefited from colonialism and racism and, today, continues to occupy positions of privilege born of this history. This includes the white commercial farmers.

What this means is that the party of revolution has the responsibility, in the interests of the success of the national democratic revolution, to win over to the side of the revolution the major sections of the beneficiaries of the colonial and racist system against which this party fought, which beneficiaries also fought against this party during the **First Phase** of the **National Democratic Revolution**.

This is a matter of strategic importance to the party of revolution.

This is because the forces it must win over operate in a situation in which they control Zimbabwe's principal productive capacity, enjoy international support as "kith and kin", have the space to hold on to their historical racist views, and are convinced that the party of revolution will be defeated and destroyed within the short term.

In the specific instance of Zimbabwe, the party of revolution must assess what it has to do with regard to these forces, in the context of the outcome of the referendum on the constitution, the results of the year 2000 parliamentary elections and the success the MDC has achieved to position itself internationally, as the credible successor to the party of revolution.

All these developments give encouragement to the erstwhile colonial forces to oppose the party of revolution.

At the same time, their material interests, in the context of the adoption of correct positions by the party of revolution, and the decisive implementation of these positions, would lead them to side with the party in power.

In other words, the struggle to win their allegiance for the pursuit of the goals of the **Second Phase** of the **National Democratic Revolution** can be won.

The party of revolution has to ensure that it addresses this matter in a way that will ensure that it succeeds.

In this context, it must bear in mind the totality of the national and social forces it has to mobilise to ensure that it can successfully pursue the goals of the **Second Phase of the National Democratic Revolution.**

For example, work will have to be done to win the allegiance of such important forces as the trade union movement, the civil service, the Ndebele-speaking people and the intelligentsia, with the party of revolution elaborating specific programmes for each of these, and other, formations and groups.

Taking into account everything we have said so far, we must now come to the practical steps that the party of revolution in Zimbabwe must take to ensure that it achieves the central strategic objective we have already stated.

This is to re-establish itself among the people as the only genuine leader of the national democratic revolution and therefore a reliable defender of the fundamental interests of these masses and of their country.

This requires that the party of revolution and the government take political and economic initiatives that will both promote the achievement of this objective and put Zimbabwe on a firm course towards its recovery.

We therefore continue our presentation to respond to the question, what is to be done!

In Chapter I of the Zimbabwe Millennium Economic Recovery Programme (1.9 - 1.11), the following statements are made:

"The vision of this Economic Recovery Programme is to mobilise all national stakeholders under the leadership of the Government to implement a package of synchronised macro-economic stabilisation policy measures, which will be both anti-cyclical and anti-inflationary. Government, Business, the Labour Movement and Civil Society must, therefore, build a common vision and accept respective responsibilities towards restoring the vibrancy of the economy. The call for resolute action by all social partners is predicated on the self evident truth that the current macro-economic imbalances can neither wither away on their own nor, for that matter, be resolved by a single actor".

"All stakeholders must have a shared vision and confidence in the efficacy and sustainability of the envisaged corrective policy measures if the fundamental causes of the crisis are to be reversed. Total commitment accompanied by public accountability to the timeous implementation of agreed policy measures is a critical success criteria (sic) of this programme."

"An enhanced policy dialogue with international co-operating partners needs to be conducted with the objective of enlisting their support in achieving major programme objectives in a manner which does not accentuate the economic distress currently being experienced by the generality of our population."

Later (4.11), the document says:

"The efficiency of inflation targeting...will depend on the commitments of all social partners to achieve a social contract. However, if such a consensus is elusive, it will be difficult for monetary policy to achieve targeted inflation rates. Hence, it is prudent to directly influence both the composition and level of aggregate demand through interest rate targeting."

We agree fully with these observations and believe that their implementation would help to move Zimbabwe forward decisively.

As we interpret them, what they say is the following:

1.0 The Government of Zimbabwe must lead the whole nation to achieve economic

recovery. This would also create the possibility to address the reality correctly mentioned in the ZMERP where it says: "there has been a marked strain on the social sectors. Poverty levels have risen, against the background of rising unemployment, aggravated by high population growth and inadequate poverty alleviation measures."

2.0 The success of the recovery programme depends on Zimbabwe's social partners coming together in a social contract bound together by agreed objectives and a shared commitment to ensure the accomplishment of agreed goals and targets. Action must therefore be taken to bring these social partners together, encompassing government, business, labour and civil society.

3.0 Zimbabwe's international co-operating partners should also be engaged to ensure that they support ZMERP in a manner that is sustainable and contributes to the country's recovery.

4.0 ZMERP should be implemented in a transparent manner in the context of ensuring public accountability that would give confidence to the people that a determined effort was being made to address the urgent problems they are experiencing.

Accordingly, to implement what has already been agreed as reflected in the ZMERP:

- The Government should act to bring the social partners together in a transparent and truly interactive process.
- The party of revolution should mobilise the masses and all sectors of society to rally behind this initiative, including those organised groups that describe themselves as the opposition, mobilising them around the imperative for a patriotic response to the challenges facing Zimbabwe.
- Consistent with this, both the party of revolution and the national democratic state must act to encourage free, open and critical discussion

throughout the country: this should include taking such actions as would ensure the freedom of the press.

- Both the party of revolution and the national democratic state should also take all necessary action to ensure that everybody sees, in action, that this is a truly democratic state that serves the interests of all Zimbabweans.
- The Government should take steps to open a sustained dialogue with the country's international co-operation partners, ready to respond honestly to any critical observations these partners may have.
- At the same time, the party of revolution should reach out to progressive political parties and other organised formations especially in the developed world, to engage them on the challenges facing Zimbabwe and the response of the people to these challenges.
- Both the party of revolution and the government should also launch an African outreach programme focussing especially on Southern Africa.
- The party of revolution and the government should conduct a sustained and credible communication campaign both in Zimbabwe and internationally. It is critically important that this campaign should have as its strategic focus the expansion of Zimbabwe circle of friends and supporters and to reduce to the absolute minimum the number of fronts on which the party of revolution and the national democratic state have to engage in battle. Accordingly, this campaign should avoid driving away anybody both domestically and externally, on the basis that they are necessarily involved in "neo-imperialist machinations aimed at limiting national sovereignty..." (1.2). The messages that would be communicated should include assurances that:

the people of Zimbabwe, regardless of political affiliation, are united in their own sovereign action to pull the country out of crisis;

this united national action is also focussed on further entrenching democracy in Zimbabwe, to ensure that the country occupies the front rank as a defender of democracy and human rights: this will help to set the stage for free and fair elections in the Presidential elections next year;

Zimbabwe is a stable and peaceful country and is involved in a process further to defend the independence of the judiciary, to guarantee the rule of law and to improve the safety and security of all citizens, both black and white;

the united action of the people is also addressing such economic questions as achieving the necessary macro-economic balances and giving the impetus to renewed and high and sustained economic growth and development; and,

Zimbabwe is a critical contributor to the process of ensuring that Southern Africa and Africa are democratic, peaceful and prosperous.

The ZMERP spells out correctly what needs to be done with regard to **the economy** to ensure its recovery. Accordingly:

- the party of revolution and the government should make a determined effort genuinely and openly to engage all social partners and the international co-operation partners in a discussion of the ZMERP proposals;
- the government should ensure that this process is not long drawn out, so that the country can move to the stage of implementation as quickly as possible: the implementation process has to be resolute, sustained and transparent;
- from the beginning of this interactive process and subsequently, the party of revolution and the government should communicate and emphasise their own openness to the views of the people by constantly reiterating the important point in ZMERP (2.5.2) that: "economic doctrine and orthodox precepts, important as they are, should not be allowed to create intellectual and institutional roadblocks to problem-solving and formulation of effective strategies applicable to local conditions.";
- both the party of revolution and the government have to be very frank and open with the people about the sacrifices that everybody will necessarily have to endure to ensure that Zimbabwe recovers. As ZMERP says, "Costs of the economic adjustment will be equitably shared amongst all partners." (2.4): in this context, both the party of revolution and the government will have to explain to the country in a frank manner, what is meant by the correct observations in ZMERP (4.3 and 4.4) that:

"Chronic fiscal imbalances define both the origins of the prolonged economic imbalances, as well as a starting point for packaging elements of a Recovery Programme. There has been a continual mismatch between expenditures and revenues, resulting in high budget deficits, ranging between 6% and 10% over the last decade. Delayed fundamental reforms of public expenditures linked to the creation of a restructured and focused Government machinery for delivering Public Sector Services has made deficits a recurring phenomenon. The funding of these deficits has had adverse economy-wide repercussions.

"A sustainable fiscal position has been made more elusive due to failure to stimulate productive efficiency through privatisation, sale of public assets and commercialisation, as well as reducing the size of the civil service. Furthermore, parastatal losses continue to be a drain on the fiscus."

- the party of revolution and the government will have to take the first steps to demonstrate the commitment of the leadership of the national democratic revolution to 'sharing the costs of the economic adjustment' by honestly and openly "tightening its belt" to set the country on the correct footing with regard to the willingness to withstand the pain that Zimbabwe must necessarily experience;

- the party of revolution, in particular, will also have to carry out the necessary political work to communicate with those sections of the population, both within the public service and the public in general, that will be most affected by the temporary cost of the implementation of the ZMERP;
- the party of revolution will have to keep its eyes focused on the achievement of the economic objectives of ZMERP described in the Summary of the Programme as intended to:

- # Consolidate fiscal adjustment policies;
- # Accelerate and complete the Public Enterprise reforms;
- # Stabilise prices at lower levels;
- # Lower interest rates;
- # Stabilise the value of the Zimbabwe dollar and resolve the foreign currency crisis;
- # Deepen financial sector reforms;
- # Stimulate the growth of the productive sectors;
- # Build confidence;
- # Protect vulnerable social groups;
- # Establishment of Implementation, Accountability and Monitoring Institutions;

- the leadership of the party of revolution, at all levels, will have to educate itself about economic questions so that it can lead the process of the economic recovery of Zimbabwe;
- in this context, the leadership will have to understand that the great strategic challenge that faces Zimbabwe today is this economic recovery: it will have to accept that resort to anti-imperialist rhetoric, (1.2 - 1.4), will not solve the problems of Zimbabwe but may compound them: it will also have to understand that without this recovery, the political, social and economic situation in the country will worsen, leading to a general crisis that will destroy the independent national democratic state for whose birth the people of Zimbabwe engaged in a difficult struggle for more than a century; and,
- this leadership must also understand that Zimbabwe has been a jewel in the African crown as a force for progressive change, and not merely an historic and nostalgic victor over the last remnants of colonialism: the leader of Zimbabwe's party of revolution continues to inspire hope that he will be among the front ranks of those who will lead the African process of renewal, as Africa works to implement the AU and MAP: the Continent continues to think that Zimbabwe has the capacity to play a vanguard role regardless of any internal changes in its leadership: nevertheless, the Continent also understands that unless the party of revolution in Zimbabwe succeeds at home to address the tasks of the Second Phase of the National Democratic Revolution, it cannot succeed to lead Africa towards the achievement of these tasks. The party of revolution of Zimbabwe cannot afford to disappoint these expectations, in its own and Africa's interests.

CONCLUSION

Zimbabwe can, and must win!

Zimbabwe must, and can defeat her enemies - poverty that is worsening and underdevelopment that is deepening!

To achieve these objectives, the party of revolution must discharge its obligations as the leader of the national democratic revolution, for the achievement of the objectives of the **Second Phase** of this Revolution.

The party of revolution has no choice but to engage in new thinking to produce new solutions.

The party of revolution has to reaffirm its traditions of:

- critical analysis;
- self criticism that allows for free expression of opinion inside and outside the party;
- understanding and acceptance of objective reality;
- honesty in the conduct of its affairs and its exercise of leadership;
- confidence in the progressive instincts of its cadres and the masses of the people as a whole; and,
- internationalist responsibility to the region, the continent and the global progressive movement.

The progressive forces of our region, Africa and the world have an internationalist responsibility to support the efforts of the people of Zimbabwe to put their country on the path to recovery, reconstruction and development.

The progressive forces of Zimbabwe, led by the party of revolution, have an internationalist responsibility to ensure that their country plays its role as a factor for the all-round stability and renewal of our region and continent.

In as much as our region and continent cannot succeed to develop without a strong and successful Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe cannot succeed outside the context of a strong and successful region and continent.

These twin objectives cannot be achieved by the pursuit of policies that are insensitive to the simultaneous achievement of both these goals.

This dialectical inter-connection is a matter of fundamental importance.

It therefore requires the deepest understanding by the progressive and patriotic forces of our region and continent of everything we have to take into account.

Among these, and of great importance, are the progressive and patriotic forces of Zimbabwe, led by ZANU-PF.

It also demands the most rational and objective action.

Together, we have a common responsibility to ensure that the defeat of the crisis facing Zimbabwe demonstrates that indeed our continent is well on its way towards its renaissance.

We share a common responsibility to ensure that the winning masses of Zimbabwe play a vanguard role in the transformation of Africa into the peaceful, democratic, prosperous and leading continent that it can, and must be during this, the African Century.

The struggle continues! Victory is certain!

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